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Notes and References should be cited as under :

1. P. J. Marshall, *Bengal : The British Bridgehead, The Cambridge History of India*, (Cambridge 1987), p. 77.
2. Willem Van Schendel, 'Economy of the Working Classes'. Sirajul Islam (ed.), *History of Bangladesh 1704-1971*, Vol. II, (Economic History), (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh 1992), pp. 542-99.
3. W. H. Morris-Jones, "Pakistan Post-Mortem and the Roots of Bangladesh", *Political Quarterly*, Vol. 18 (April-June), 1972, pp. 187-200.

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RIGHTS OF SLAVES METED OUT BY ISLAM IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

Muhammad Shafiq Ahmed

Slaves, in every age, were in a miserable condition. They were most inhumanly deprived of human rights or privileges whatsoever. Therefore, *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines slaves as human beings deprived of most or all rights and freedoms.¹ They were damnably ill-treated and dealt with utmost cruelty amongst the Greeks,² the Romans,³ the Persians,⁴ the Indians,⁵ the Egyptians,⁶ the Jews,⁷ the Christians⁸ etc.. Muslims were accused of sanctioning slavery as an institution and setting it up. Although in Islam the prisoners of wars (Jihad-i-Shariah or *bona fide* lawful wars of Islam) were treated as slaves as a provisional necessity, in spite of that, the tortures and maltreatment which were inflicted to them cruelly and inhumanly by the Americans and the Europeans and by their ancestors-the Greeks and the Romans, Muslims were not habituated or accustomed with such inhuman practices. Mass killings, mass hangings and slow-lingering deaths of prisoners of war in chilly cold Siberian concentration camps were unthinkable in Islam. Islam always denounced and never allowed these inhuman methods of afflictions. Though Muslims practised slavery for a long period, slaves were treated among them with generosity and humanity. According to *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* :

"Islam gave a new character or direction to this institution (the institution of slavery). Muhammad found slavery well established in Arabia when he began to preach the new religion in the first years of the 7th century. He taught that slaves should be treated with humanity and that the liberation of slaves was a pious and a meritorious act."⁹

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The *Holy Quran* and the traditions of the Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H.) specially his sermon at the Farewell Pilgrimage on 23 Feb. 632 A. D. constituted among other things a charter of liberty and rights for slaves, in which every possible human right for them were ensured. Among these rights the right to life, right to good treatment, civil rights, viz. right to basic necessities, right to education, right to unveil personal potentialities, right to social security, status and position and above all the most valuable right of a human being, the right to freedom are worth mentioning.

Throughout the ages, the laws and customs of many nations — ancient, medieval or modern — gave the owners of slaves the absolute right to kill them (slaves) even for a nominal mistake. Islam not only seized the right of this merciless practice of slave-killing, it rather, removed the right of the owners of even a petty maltreatment or cruelty. The attitude of Islam towards slaves was a completely revolutionary one. It gave humanity perfect guidance to noble conduct with slaves at a time when they had no right to be treated as human beings. Prior to Islam, *Ayyam-i-Jahilyyah* (the Age of Ignorance) was the time when slaves were treated as animals. They led an unhappy life under their ruthless masters and were denied of ordinary amenities of life, were also tortured, punished and not provided with any social and legal status. At such a time Islam called upon mankind to be kind and good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the needy, the neighbours, the strangers, the companion by one's side, the fellow traveller and the wayfarer and slaves.¹⁰

Islam postulated a civil law, according to which no master had any right to punish or inflict pains on his slaves, except in the way in which he dealt with his own sons. Islamic Shariah law allowed slaves the right to the topmost security of life as, in Islam, no master had a right to abandoning or neglecting his slave. No master had a right to murder a slave ; if any master did so, his life would be taken too. Even, if there is any lack of sympathy, the ownership should be transferred and the master should be condemned. The Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H.) said. "He who kills his slave, we shall kill him ; who mutilates his nose; we shall cut his nose, and who gelds our slave, we shall get him gelded in return."¹¹

The *Holy Quran* laid down two provisions protecting the life of slave. One, protecting a slave's life by prescribing retaliation. Two, protecting a slave's life by remitting retaliation. The *Holy Quran* providing these two provisions, says : "The law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder : the free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman. But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord."¹²

Distinctively from the former prophets and social thinkers, the Prophet Muhammad (P. B. U. H) took the issue of slaves very positively. In his tradition he drew the attention of the masters to the fact that it was easy for the creator to make the masters owned by the slaves instead of the slaves being owned by the masters. For the first time in history, the Prophet (P. B. U. H) declared that slaves should not be called as slaves, for, they and their owners were in the relation of brotherhood, sonship or daughtership. He said : "Those whom you call your slaves are your brothers, whom God has subordinated to you."¹³ He also said that the owners should not hurt their feelings calling them as "slaves !" but should call them as "O our young men! (or our girls !)"¹⁴

Whereas the Greek Philosopher Aristotle considered a slave as a machine with a soul, the Prophet of Islam (P. B. U. H) honoured him (slave) as human being with a soul like his master's soul. He said : "He (a slave) too has a soul like his master's."¹⁵

For ages , slaves were always denied ordinary amenities of life. The Prophet (P. B. U. H), providing them with the right to basic necessities of life, commanded masters. "Therefore, give those who God has subordinated to you the same food as you eat and give them the same dress as you wear."¹⁶ *Shahih Bukhari* quotes an instance where a Muslim master gave better clothing to his slave.¹⁷

Slaves, almost in every nation, were ruthlessly engaged in unbearable or arduous labour. The Prophet (P. B. U. H), therefore, asked the owners to provide their slaves, with the economic right to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work . He said to the masters : 'Do not take so

much work from them (slaves) as may be too heavy for them and if it is too heavy, then you should join them and assist them in their work."¹⁸

Islam gave many valuable civil rights to the slaves too. The Prophet (P. B. U. H) improved their social status and gave them the membership of the family and the nation and citizenship of the newly born Islamic state. Thus he integrated them in the newly born Muslim society. Zayid, a slave boy, was accepted in sonship by the Prophet (P. B. U. H) himself, and he (Zayid) was integrated as a member of the Prophet's (P. B. U. H) family. The Prophet (P. B. U. H.), later on, set him at liberty and when his (Zayid's) parents heard the news of his liberty they came to take him back, but Zayid refused to go with his parents and preferred staying in the Prophet's (P. B. U. H) family as there were no discriminations or differences between Zayid and other members of the Prophet's family. All discriminations of caste, race, colour and also the negligence evolving from them had been levelled down by the Prophet of Islam (P. B. U. H).

To accept slaves as members of the families and to integrate them into the new Muslim society, Islam provided slaves—male or female—with the right to marriage, kinship, social integrity and dignity. The *Holy Quran* emphasised the human dignity by banning the prostitution of the slave-women who, prior to Islam, were used either for the satisfaction of sex or as prostitutes. The *Holy Quran* abolishing both the practices, says :

"Marry those among you who are single, or the virtuous ones among your slaves, male or female : if they are in poverty, God will give them means out of His grace : for God encompasseth all, and He knoweth all things. Let those who find not the wherewithal for marriage keep themselves chaste, until God gives them means out of his grace, and if any of your slaves ask for a deed in writing (to enable them to earn their freedom for a certain sum), give them such a deed if you know any good in them, yea, give them something yourselves out of the means which god has given to you. but force not your maids to prostitution when they desire chastity, in order that you may make a gain in the goods of this life. But if anyone compels them, yet after such compulsion, is God Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (to them)".¹⁹

The Quran also restricted slave-girls' sexual relation to one person and urged their legal marriage. It also encouraged a free man to marry a Muslim slave-girl in preference to a mushrika (polytheist) free girl. It says: "Do not marry unbelieving women until they believe: A slave-woman who believes is better than an unbelieving woman ."20

Al-Quran also encourages a master of a female slave to protect her, take care of her and marry her and even it enjoins upon the masters a moral duty to find spouses for such slaves. It says : "If any of you have not the means wherewith to wed free believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hand possesses."21

The Prophet (P. B. U. H) himself honoured the above-mentioned *Quranic* provision .He married his cousin, Zainab, to his slave Zayid to prove that the slave had the same honour as an aristocrat free person had. He himself married Safiya, a slave-girl, and Zainab, divorcee of Zayid, a freed slave. He founded a provision that when a master intends marrying a slave-girl then it is better that she is freed before the contract of marriage. It is noticeable here that this provision of Islam was evidently a departure from the practice of the nations other than Muslims who enslaved free men or deprived them of some of their civil rights for marrying slave-girls.

To abolish all forms of discriminations in the society, Islam allowed for slaves marriage with the daughters of their masters, companions of the Prophet (P. B. U. H), Caliphs and even the kings of Muslim kingdoms. History is abounding with instances that many Muslim slaves married the daughters of Muslim kings. The case of Subuktagin, a slave, marrying the daughter of Alptagin, the king of Ghazni, can be mentioned here for example.

Islam brought about a revolutionary change in providing slaves with an unprecedented right of status and dignity. The right of blooming personality and uncovering inherent talents, faculties and potentialities is inevitable for the dignified living of human beings. Islam provided slaves with this valuable right too. It gave them the right of education, learning, teaching, wisdom and research. The slave scholars were highly respected by the Muslims. Their main centres of learning were Makka, Yemen,

Kufa, Madina etc. . As for dignified living, at first though slaves were given house-hold duties but later on, if they showed worth and promise, they were posted to not only the higher but the highest and topmost position of the civil services and Governmental affairs of the Islamic states. Slaves were exalted to the position of kings, chiefs of the army and even the leaders of the society. They were given not only a status equal and similar to others but were, at the same time, raised to the exalted positions of heading the armies of free men. The Prophet of Islam (P. B. U. H) himself appointed Usama, the son of Zayid, a freed slave, in preference to older and more experienced generals, in leading the expedition into Syria to seek reparation for the murder of the Muslim envoy, under whom served even such men as Abu Bakr (R.) and Umar (R.) among his companions who became the first two Caliphs after Prophet's death.²²

Bilal, a woolly-haired, flat-nosed, thick-lipped and black-coloured Negro slave was accepted by the Prophet (P. B. U. H) as one of the most dear and near companions of him and was appointed to the post of the first and chief Mu'adhdhin of the Masjid-i-Nabawi of Madina.²³ The Holy Prophet (P. B. U. H) went to such a great length that he commanded the believers : "Hear and obey (your leaders) although the man appointed above you as your leader be a Negro slave with a raisin-like head so long as he continues to enforce among you Allah's law."²⁴ Thus the Prophet (P. B. U. H) integrated slaves into the new Muslim society with due status and position.

According to Islam, all men irrespective of caste, colour or creed are born equal and are to remain equal. Numerous instances of the Prophet of Islam (P. B. U. H) and his celebrated successors stressed this principle of equality of Islam more than once. On the day of the conquest of Makka, the Prophet (P. B. U. H) circumambulated the Ka'ba on the back of a camel while he took Usama, the son of Zayid, a freed slave, to sit behind him on the same camel. It is the second Caliph Umar (R.) who shared the camel with his slave on the way to Jerusalem, when the Patriarch refused to surrender the city to anyone but the Caliph in person. Umar (R.) travelled on a camel with a single slave. The slave and the Caliph rode the camel by

turns and upheld the principle of equality of Islam. It was Umar (R) himself who expressed deep sorrow because of the death of a slave called Salim when he (the former) was about to be nominated the Prophet's successor (i.e. caliph). Such were the examples of the right of equality in Islam.

As regards the most valuable right of human beings, the right to freedom, Islam set out some revolutionary arrangements and assignments which brought to the slaves of all kinds an unprecedented chance to enjoy freedom. Since, sudden and complete manumission of slaves by one declaration was normally and economically impossible and risky in the 7th century, Islam, therefore, for the time being, though allowed existing slavery as an inevitable social evil, to be abolished through a gradual process like the abolition of the evil of drinking wine etc. side by side it introduced numerous ways and provisions in order to promote and accomplish a gradual but sure and complete abolition of slavery. For the declaration of the total abolition it awaited the time when society could be balanced without slaves. The *Holy Quran* brings to mankind more than 19 verses which ensured a gradual process leading to the complete abolition of slavery. A few of these verses are quoted below:

i) "So when you meet in battle these (prisoners) who disbelieve smite the necks, then when you have overcome them, make them prisoners and afterwards set them free as a favour or for ransom until the war lays down its burden."²⁵

"Until the war lays down its burden" --- this Quranic command is the root point which stressed that the prisoners of Jihad- i- Shariah (Legal and lawful war) can be kept in custody as long as the war-condition prevails. As soon as the Jihad ends there should be no more captives. After the end of Jihad, Shariah law leaves to the discretion of the Muslim Commander to decide whether captives of wars are to be (a) beheaded, (b) enslaved, (c) released on paying ransom, (d) exchanged with Muslim prisoners, or (e) released gratis.²⁶ There is no verse in the Quran directly permitting enslavement. In the practice of the Prophet Muhammad (P. B. U. H), however, there are few instances of it. For example, the females and children of the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraizah were enslaved and distributed by him as booty.²⁷ Certainly it is not obligatory always to enslave

prisoners of war. The commander of Muslim army has the choice to accord the captives either enslavement or any other treatment. ²⁸

(ii) "And such of your slaves as seek a writing (of emancipation), write it for them if ye are aware of aught of good in them and bestow upon them of the wealth of God which He hath bestowed upon you."²⁹

(iii) "The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them and those whose hearts are to be reconciled and to free the captives and the debtors and for the cause of God, and for the way-farers: a duty imposed by God. God is knower, wise."³⁰

(iv) "It is not righteousness that you turn your face towards the East or the West. Righteous is he who believeth in God and the Last Day and the angels and the scriptures and the prophets: and giveth his wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and orphans, and the needy and the way-farer and to those who ask and to set slaves free."³¹

(v) "God will not take you to task for that which is unintentional in your oaths but He will take you to task for the oaths which ye swear in earnest. The expiation thereof is the feeding of ten of the needy with the average of that wherewith ye feed your own folk or the clothing of them or the liberation of a slave and for him who findeth not (the wherewithal to do so) then a three days' fast." ³²

(vi) "It is not for a believer to kill a believer unless (it be) by mistake. He who hath killed a believer by mistake must set free a believing slave and pay the blood-money to the family of the slain."³³

The above extracts from the *Holy Quran* make it clear that Islam has preached among other things, a religion of slaves' enfranchisement, so that, besides the benevolent treatments meted out by Islam towards slaves, it regards the freedom of slaves a meritorious act of a high order and the enslavement of free men a despicable evil deed.

The Quranic verses related to slavery and slave-affairs, has produced not fewer than seventeen occasions by means of which

slaves must be emancipated and slavery must be abolished. The most prominent provisions are:

(i) Exercising magnanimity, clemency and compassion; (ii) taking ransom; (iii) taking ransom from the allowances which they are to be paid for the education of the children. (By means of this provision the Prophet Muhammad (P. B. U. H) set the prisoners of the battle of Badr at liberty. In that Battle the Maccans were defeated leaving seventy-two prisoners in the hands of the Muslims. Two of these prisoners were executed for their past crimes and the rest were set free on payment of ransom. Those who were not in position to pay the amount of ransom were asked to teach reading and writing to the Muslim children in lieu thereof and were then set at liberty. None was made a slave.³⁴ (iv) Concluding a kitab or a deed between the captor and the slave mentioning the amount to be paid for the manumission and in the meanwhile allowing the slave to earn in lawful means in order that he may pay the amount stipulated in the deed and required for his manumission (v) exercising "Kaffarah" (expiation) for the extirpation of sins committed through objectionable utterance breaking the commandments of God and the like, (vi) helping the slave by paying the required amount out of the resources of the captor or the master. Al-Quran urged masters to help the slaves by providing with some financial aid which will enable them to buy their freedom. It (Quran) says : "Give them (the slaves under the agreement of emancipation) something yourselves out of means which God has given to you."³⁵ (vii) assisting him from the state-fund, especially from the "Zakat fund" in order that he can buy his liberty with the money.

Professor Briffault comments:

"The ideals of freedom for all human beings, of human brotherhood, of the equality of all men before the law, of democratic Government by consultation and Universal suffrage, the ideals that inspired the French Revolution and the declaration of Rights that guided the framing of the American constitution and inflamed the struggle for independence in the Latin American countries were not inventions of the west. They find their ultimate inspiration and source in the *Holy Quran*.

They are the quintessence of what the intelligentsia of mediaeval Europe acquired from Islam over a period of centuries through the various channels of Muslim Spain, Sicily, the Crusaders, and of the ideals propagated by the various societies that developed in Europe in the wake of the Crusades in imitation of the brotherhood associations of Islam. "36

From this comment of Professor Briffault it becomes evident that Islam appeared in the first-half of the 7th century, with many revolutionary ideas of reformation, renaissance, liberty, equality, fraternity, universal human rights, matrimonial laws, social and economic justice, raising the status of women, interest free economy, democracy, abolition of kingship, aristocracy and above all with the express idea of the abolition of slavery. Therefore, by Islamic revolutionary ideals of freedom slavery was discouraged even in as far back as the first half of the 7th century A.D.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. "Slavery, Serfdom, and Forced Labour", *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th Edition, (Printed in U.S.A. 1976), Volume 16, P. 853.
2. The Greeks sanctioned slavery as a just, equitable and natural institution. The Greek philosopher Aristotle, being the acme of ancient philosophical thinking, unequivocally postulated and justified slavery on rational grounds and gave it a philosophical basis. The social life of the Greeks was based on slavery and they governed slaves by the severe penal laws. They used to inflict every possible atrocity to their slaves. For detail, see, William L. Langer, *An Encyclopaedia of World History*, 3rd ed., (U.S.A. 1957), P. 48; *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Op.cit., P.857; E. Barker, *The Politics of Aristotle*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948), Book 1 (B), PP. 9-18.
3. The Romans recognised slavery as a natural institution. According to their laws the slaves were the property of their owners. In the Roman empire, the marriage of slaves among themselves or with free men was strictly prohibited and considered illegal. They could not own property, their evidence was invalid unless given under torture. The law was specially severe and the masters had absolute power over them. They possessed the power of life and death over them and could kill them at any time. See, *The New*

Illustrated Columbia Encyclopaedia, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975) Vol. 21, PP. 62-68.

4. Persians used to maltreat their servant slaves as if they were insensate working instruments. The penalties codified in the laws of the Persians for punishing slaves for misconduct were so stern that they even gave the master the right to kill their slaves in some cases. See, *The Macmillan Family Encyclopaedia*, (London: Macmilan, 1983), Vol. 17, P.352.
5. The Indians used to have their slaves from a certain caste namely Shudras who were believed as born-slaves to remain slaves all their lives. They were assigned the meanest and the lowest duties and were regarded as untouchable and uncontactable. The Shudra caste was obliged to serve the Ksatriya (or warrior caste), the Brahmins (or priests), and the Vaisyas (or farmers, cattle-raisers, and merchants). In ancient India no Shudra would ever dare marry a high caste Hindu girl, or eat, and walk with high-caste people. Ancient laws in India laid it down that the slave could be killed even for a negligible mistake, the cruel treatments meted out to them were indescribable. For ancient Indian Laws regarding slavery, see, *Arthasastra*, Trans. into English by R. Shamasastry, (Bengalor: Government Press, 1951) P. 230.
6. Exodus, the second book of Old Testament, reports that the Egyptians made the lives of Hebrew slaves "bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor. (Roy Pinney, "Slavery", *Lexicon Universal Encyclopaedia*, (New York : Lexicon Publications, Inc. 1983), vol. 17, p.352).
7. The Jews used to make people slaves even for not performing the religious rituals. Slaves were compelled by them to lead a life of perpetual labour and were not allowed any right whatsoever. Nowhere does the Old Testament contain outright protest against slavery . The Old Testament stipulated freedom to punished slaves after a limit of 7 years to the period of servitude, although the biblical 7 year limit was apparently not always honoured (Roy Pinney , Op. cit. p. 352). Moses, the founder of Judaism, neither tried to put an end to slavery nor did he try to change the negative attitude of mankind to this. See for Hebrew Laws regarding slavery, William H. McNeill and Jean W. Sedlar, *The Ancient Near East*, (London : Oxford University Press, 1968) PP. 164-167.
8. Though Jesus, the founder of Christianity, raised his voice against slavery, for all that , the Christian Church itself held slaves and

regulated slavery. The Church prescribed for the slaves absolute submission to the will of their masters and did nothing to the complete emancipation of slaves. Though Jesus preached the maxim of love to all human beings, for all that, slaves were dealt with unbearable cruelty in the Christian societies. The author of "The spirit of Islam" comments : "To the white Christian, his black-fellow religionist may be his equal in the kingdom of heaven, but certainly not in the kingdom of this world ; in the reign of Christ, perhaps, but not in the reign of Christianity" ... Syed Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, (London ; Christopher's Publication, 1961,) P. 262.

9. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Ibid., p. 858.
10. Al-Quran, IV; 36
11. Al-Hadith, Quoted in Muhammad Qutub, *Shubhatu-Hawlat Islam* (Rendered into English by M. Tayyib Bakhsh Budayuni in the name of "Islam The Misunderstood Religion") (Dhaka : Adhunik Prakashani, 1978) pp. 49-50.
12. Al-Quran, II: 178
13. Shibli Numani, *Strat-un-Nabi*, (Karachi: Dar-ul-Ishaat, 1985,) Vol. VI, Under the chapter of the "Rights of slaves", P. 158; Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, *Sahih Bukhari*, (Dewband : *al-Maktabat-ul-Mujtabaiyah*, 1355 A. H./1937 A.D.,) Vol. II, Kitb-ul-Adab, Bab-i-Ma Ynha an Sibabi Wal Laan, P. 894.
14. Shibli, Op. cit. Vol. VI, P. 158; Muhammad Ibn Ismail, op. cit. (Calcutta, N.D.) Vol. I, Kitab-ul-Itaq or Manumission of slaves, Bab-u-Kirahiyat-ut-Tatawul-i-Ala ar-Raqtq-wa- Qawluha Abdiy wa Amatiy, pp.346-347.
15. W. Arafat, "The Attitude of Islam to Slavery", *The Islamic Quarterly*, (The Islamic Cultural Centre, London 1966) vol. x, No. I & II, p.15.
16. Abu Hamid Muhammad Ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum-ud-Din*, (Bayrut: Dar-ul-Marifa, N.D.) Vol. II, "The Rights of slaves", p.219; Shibli, op. cit., Vol. VI, P. 158, Muhammad Ibn Ismail; op. cit., (Dewband : *Al-Maktabat-ul-Mujtabiyah*, N.D.) Vol. I, Kitab-ul-Adab, P. 894.
17. Muhammad Ibn Ismail, Op. cit., (Calcutta N.D.) Vol. II, Kitab-ul-Itaq. P.346.
18. Al-Ghazali, op. cit., P. 219; Shibli, op. cit., P. 158; Muhammad Ibn Ismail, op. cit., Vol. I, Kitb-ul-Adab, P. 894.
19. Al-Quran, XXIV : 32, 33.
20. Ibid, II : 221

21. Ibid, IV : 25, see also, Ibid, IV : 3 ; XXIII; 6 : XXIV : 32; XXIV : 58; XXXIII : 50 ; XXXIII : 52; XXXIII : 55.
22. Ibn Hisham, *Sirat-Un-Nabaawiyyah*, (Egypt: Al-Maktabah-at Tawfiqyyah, N.D.,) Volume IV, P.-176; 'Abd-us-Salam Harun, *Tahdhyb-u- Sirat-i- Ibn-i-Hisham*, (Bayrut : Dar-u-Ahya-at-Tarath-al-Arabiyyi, 1408 A.H./1989 A. D.,) pp. 372-373.; Muhammad Ibn Jarir Tabari, *Tarikh-al-Umam-i-wa-al-Mamluk* (Best known as *Tarikh-ut-Tabari*), (Bayrut: Dar-ul-Kalam, N.D.) Vol. II, Part, III, P. 188.
23. Muhammad Zakaria Saharanpuri, *Hikayat-i-Sahabah*, (Rendered into Bengali by Mowlana Md. Sakawat-Ullah), Revised edition, (Dhaka: Tabligi Kutub Khana, 1398/1978,) P.19.
24. Al-Hadith, Quoted in Muhammad Qutub, op. cit., P. 61.
25. Al-Quran, XLVII: 4.
26. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State*, (Trans, into Bengali by Sharif Abdullah Harun and Gholam Rasul in the name of Muslim Rastra Parichalan Babasta) (Dhaka : Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, 1981) P. 258.
27. Ibid, P, 259.
28. Burhan Al-Din Al-Marginani, *Al-Hidaya*, (Karachi : Kalam company N.D.) Vol. II, chapter of booty and its distribution, PP. 566-567.
29. Al- Quran XXIV : 33
30. Ibid, IX : 60.
31. Ibid, II : 177.
32. Ibid, V : 92.
33. Ibid, IV : 92.
34. Muhammad Akram Khan, *Mostafa Charit*, 4th ed, (Dhaka: Khairun Prakashani, 1975) pp. 620-621.
35. Al- Quran, XXIV : 33.
36. Quoted in M. Ershadul Bari, "Human Rights in Islam with Special Reference to Women's Rights", a paper presented at the International Seminar on Human Rights in Islam, Sonargaon Pan-pacific Hotel, (Dhaka, 5th October 1994,) PP. 15-16.

ON THE ASSOCIATIVE CHANGES OF SOME DVANDVAS OF BANGLA LANGUAGE : A CASE STUDY

A. B. M. Razaul Karim Faquire

Language is an ever changing system of the human inheritances, always changing their structures and forms (Reddy, B. R., 1996 : p. 1). As a result, diachronically we find various appearances of a particular language over a period. As a language changes its forms and structures, new words are produced and many words lose their acceptability as words. The inclusion of new words in a language takes place through the process of word-formation (Quirk, R and etal., 1989:p. 976). Compounding comprises a wide area of word-formation process. *Shamasha* is a kind of compounding process in the Paninian approach to Bangla grammar (Chatterji, S. K., 1989:p. 175). Through the process of *Shamasha* mainly six kinds of compounds are produced, they are namely *Dvandva*, *Dvigu*, *Tatpurusha*, *Karmadharay*, *Bahuvrihi* and *Abhayivab* (Haque, M. E., 1943:p. 138) of which *Dvandva* is our concern in the present study. A *dvandva* which is derived through the process of *dvandva shamasha* is known as copulative compound in morphology (Bauer, L., 1993:p. 31). The word *ma-baba* is an example of *dvandva* (copulative compound) whose form, *ma-baba* combines those of an initial element *ma* (mother) and a head *baba* (father). While the compounds in Bangla traditional grammar have been categorised into six groups on the basis of semantic criteria, (Bauer, L. 1993 : p. 31) following a similar approach of Morphology subdivided the same into four

groups-exocentric compound, *bahuvrihi* (or endocentric compound), appositional compound and *dvandva* (or copulative compound) according to the semantic criteria. Following the classical sense a *dvandva* in Bangla can be defined—as a set of two words (or in some cases three words) in a certain order whose members are of the same parts of speech with the same *bibhokti* (case marker), pertaining to a selected semantic field, exhibit a specific sense—relation between them are connected by lexical link. A *dvandva* is more than a balance word, binominal, lexical pair and lexical duet, although Reddy (Reddy, B. R., 1996:p. 1) conceived of these concepts as identical with *dvandva*. Thus, *dvandva* is a kind of compound which can be explained with both the traditional and morphological approach.

Dvandva Shamasha is a lexical process and its structure indicates only the constituents of a compounded word but not the associative strength of the two elements involved in a *dvandva*. How the two certain words are paired together in a *dvandva* is not perceived from the morphology of *dvandva*. Why a particular word comes closer to a certain word, why not to others for making up a *dvandva* are now questions. To seek the answer to these questions, we will attempt to work out the nature of semantic relation between the words involved in a *dvandva* within the framework of experimental psychology where the semantic relation between two particular words is dealt with in the process of W(ord) A(ssociation). WA is a psycholinguistic process or an intervening variable which semantically relates the two lexical units to each other confined to a semantic field. Glucksberg, S. and Danks, J. H., (1975:p. 59) stated that word-associations take place by mental operation in the semantic field that depend upon both knowledge of the language and knowledge of the world. Now it can be assumed that, the interaction between linguistic competence and knowledge of the experimental world might determine the connotative relations between the words involved in *dvandva*.

Association is the value or strength between the two particular words (Andreas, B. G. 1968:p. 340). The strength of association can be brought out by statistical analysis of the data

revealed by the WA task which is inferred from the speed with which a verbal response is given in a certain stimulus situation or from the frequency with which it is given in a group of subjects in particular circumstances (Andreas, B. G. 1968:p. 340). In this study the associative strength will be inferred from the frequency of responses by a group of subjects. To study the associative strength with a WA task the experimenter gives stimulus words (initial elements of *dvandva*) and each of the subjects is to respond with the word that first comes to mind (Andreas, 1968:p. 340). Thus, the higher the frequency of responses by the subjects the stronger the association between the two elements of the *dvandva* (Andreas, B. G. 1968:p. 359).

METHOD

SAMPLE

To draw a conclusion on the matter concerned in this study, a WA task was administered to a group of students (n=180) of the Institute of Modern Languages. Of them 48 were female and 132 were male between 18 and 45 years. The subjects were involved in other major fields of study or different professions were learning different foreign languages like Japanese, French or English as optional subjects.

MATERIALS

A list of 54 words were prepared for WA task. The words in the list were chosen from the initial elements of the *dvandvas* (copulative compound) as stimulus words from the different traditional Bangla grammar books Bangla Bhashar Vyakaran (Chowdhury, Munier and et al., 1943), Bhasha Prokash Bangla Vyakaran (Chatterji, S. K., 1989) and Vyakaran Monjuri (Haque, M. E., 1943). This type of stimulus words include, among others *poth* (road), *pan* (betal leaf) etc.

PROCEDURE

The WA task was administered to the subjects as a group test in the classroom of different languages. Before administering the

task subjects were instructed carefully to elicit the associative response for each and every stimulus word. In view of this, subjects were instructed to write the response word corresponding to each stimulus word within a limited time and they were also instructed to write it immediately after reading the given stimulus word. They were instructed through an example of stimulus-response pairing work. They were also instructed to respond without thinking too long.

A time limit of 5 minutes for writing the responses was determined through a pilot survey so that they could not think or other things while responding. They were advised to respond within 5 minutes but were told that it could be extended if some more time was required. The word-association task sheet was distributed to the subjects on the back side up and they were given the signal to turn over and start writing after the distribution and instruction was finished. The starting time and the ending time were recorded with a stop watch. After finishing the task the subjects were asked to give personal information (name, subject, age and sex) about themselves on the response sheet.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The responses elicited by the stimulus words in the WA task have been categorised into three categories as in the following on the basis of frequency of responses. It is worth mentioning that some responses elicited are not the heads of *dvandvas*. This type of responses with less than 6% of occurrence are not presented in the Table as data.

- (a) H(igh) F(requency) R(esponse) — The response that has occurred more than 50% times here is said to be HFR.
- (b) M(edium) F(requency) R(esponse) — The response that has occurred ranging from 16% to 50% times here is said to be MFR.
- (c) L(ow) F(requency) R(esponse) — The response that has occurred ranging from 6% to 15% times here is said to be LFR.

The different degrees of frequency have been examined in that, the quantative measure may serve our purpose of drawing a conclusion of this study.

WORD ASSOCIATION DATA

(The numbers placed in front of each response indicate the frequency of responses)

Table-1

DVANDVAS AND THEIR INITIAL ELEMENTS AS STIMULI WITH DIFFERENT DEGREES OF ELICITED RESPONSES.

DVANDVAS	FIRST ELEMENTS	SAR 91-180	MAS30-90	WAR12-29
Pothghat	POTH		66ghat-30rasta	
Pantamak Pansupari	PAN		57chun-45supari	
Dhupdhuna	DHUP		57dhua	
Kanakhora	KANA	21kani	54khora-30ondo	
Shorgomortyo Shorgonorok	SHORGO	141norok		
Adajol Adakachkola	ADA		159roshun	15peaj-12lobon 24kachkola-21jol
Dhondoulot Dhonshompod Dhonman	DHON		45doulot- 36shompod	18man
Dhuddoi Dhudbhat Dhudghee Dhudshagu	DUDH		36bhat	15doi-12kola-15pani 24chini
Akashpatal Akashbatash	AKASH	99patal	30batash	
Mathamundu	MATHA		51betha	15hat-18chul-21dhora
Devdevi Devdanob	DEV		84devi	21debota
Kombeshi	KOM	156beshi		
Shatpach	SHAT		48pach-36shotero	15shomudro-18at
Jontujanuar	JONTU	114januar	39jib	15prani
Bhalomondo	BHALO	138mondo		24kharap
Pokamakor	POKA	132makor		
Kalokolom	KALI	105kolom	39doat	
Chabiskut	CHA		69pan	27chini-27pani 21biskut-15coffee
Dakumura Dakural	DA		48kural-45boti 36kumra	
Doyamaya dakkhinnyo	DOYA	90maya		18dakkhinnyo- 12nirdoy
Jomakhorocho	JOMA	123khoroch		
Ainadalot Ainkanun Ainshrinkhol	AIN		45kanun-42adalot	18beain-12srinkhola

DVANDVAS	FIRST ELEMENTS	SAR 91-180	MAS30-90	WAR12-29
Itpathor Itkath Itshurki	IT		51pathor- 57patkel	15balu-12kath
Dekhashuna	DEKHA		87shuna	240dekha-12nadekha
Chalakchotur	CHALAK		69chotur-63boka	
Gurushishshyo Gurupuruhit	GURU	117shishshyo		15shikkhok
Badshahbegom	BADSHAH	60fokir		24raja-15proja
Deqaneoa	DEOA	108neoa		18paoa
Bakibokea	BAKI		75nogod	21faki
Hatighora	HATI	102ghora		15 bag
Boipustok Boipotro Boikhata	BOI	99khata		24kolom-18potro
Ukilbaristar Ukilmoktar	UKIL		69moktar	18daktar-24barister 2ain
Pirpoygombor Pirmurid Pirdorbesb Piraolia	PIR		60fokir	21dorbesb-18murid 12aoliya
Folful Folmul	FOL		54ful-39mul	15am
Garighora Garipalki Garibari	GARI		57bari-45ghora	
Asholnokol	ASHOL	156nokol		
Khatakolom Khatapotro	KHATA		45boi, 81kolom	15potro-18pencil
Nakkan Nakmukh	NAK	99kan		24mukh-15cok
Grohonokkhtra Grohouppogroh	GROHO	108nokkotro	42upogroho	
Jaoaasha	JAOA	57asha		
Rajniti Orthoniti	RAJNITI			18durniti 18orthoniti
Cholafera	CHOLA	108fera		12bola
Chunkali	CHUN		89pan	24kali-12supari
Patromitro Patropatri	PATRO	120patri		18mitro
Shakkkhisabud	SHAKKHI			21sabud-18badi 21gopal
Noycoy	NOY		81coy-69dosh	
Rajabadshah Rajaujir Rajaproja Rajarani	RAJA	90rani	42badsha	24proja
Alobatsh Aloadhar	ALO		69onkohkar- 51batash-36adhar	

DVANDVAS	FIRST ELEMENTS	SAR 91-180	MAS30-90	WAR12-29
Bonnakhora	BONNA		66khora	
Hortal- dhormoghot	HORTAL		54dhormoghot	24oborodh-12bangchur 14bondho
Bakshopetra	BAKSHO			21petra
Cinemabiosco Cinema- theatar	CINEMA		30natok	18cobi-27theatar-15 dekha-15bioscope
School- College	SCHOOL	141college		
Telephone- telegram	TELEPHONE			24telegram- 18television

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

From this WA task we find various distributions of the frequency of responses depending on the nature of stimulus words. Some stimulus words elicited only HFR, some elicited only MFR and some other elicited LFR. Some stimulus words elicited any two kinds of the HFR, MFR and LFR. Most of the stimulus words elicited all categories—HFR, MFR and LFR. In some cases, more than one response have concentrated in any one of the heading of HFR, MFR and LFR. Thus, the responses elicited by the particular stimulus word are diverse. All of these diverse responses are not associative. Associative responses are always semantically determined by the stimulus involved and are attributable to the semantic determinism (Osgood, G. E., 1968:p. 708).

SEMANTIC RELATIONS IN DVANDVAS REVEAL THROUGH WA TASK

The *dvandvas* of our concern are made up of associative responses in that the two elements of *dvandvas* are semantically related to each other (Bauer, L., 1993.p. 31). Therefore, in the case of *dvandva* the HFR, MFR and LFR in the TABLE-1 above refer to the strong association, moderate association and weak association respectively. Thus, the *dvandvas* can be classified into a number of categories on the basis of the degree of

associative strength that exists between the first element of a given *dvandva* and the head of that *dvandva* appeared as associative response. These categories are as follows :

DVANDVAS with Strong Association : *Dvandvas* which revealed strong association are *shorgo-norok*, *akash-patal*, *kom-beshi*, *jontu-januar*, *bhalo-mondo*, *poka-makor*, *kali-kolom*, *doya-maya*, *joma-khoroch*, *guru-shisshyo*, *deoa-neoa*, *hati-ghora*, *boi-khata*, *ashol-nokol*, *nak-kan*, *groho-nokkhotro*, *jaoa-asha*, *chola-fera*, *patro-patri*, *raja-rani*, *cinema-natok* and *school-college* in this study.

These *dvandvas* with strong association are widely used by Bangla native speakers nowadays.

DVANDVAS with Moderate Association : *Dvandvas* which revealed moderate association are *poth-ghat*, *pan-supari*, *kana-khora*, *dhon-doulot*, *don-shompod*, *dhud-bhat*, *akash-batash*, *dev-devi*, *shat-pach*, *cha-pan*, *da-kumra*, *da-kural*, *ain-adalat*, *ain-kanun*, *it-pathor*, *dekha-shuna*, *chalak-chotur*, *ukil-moktar*, *fol-ful*, *fol-mul*, *gari-ghora*, *ghari-bari*, *khata-kolom*, *groho-upogroho*, *noy-coy*, *raja-badshah*, *alo-batash*, *alo-adhar*, *bonna-khora*, *dhormoghot-hortal*, *hortal-dhormoghot*, *radio-television* and *radio-t.v.* in our present study.

These *dvandvas* with moderate association are often used by the native speakers nowadays.

DVANDVAS with Moderate Association : *Dvandvas* which revealed weak association are *ada-jol*, *ada-khachkola*, *dhon-man*, *dhud-doi*, *doya-dhokkhina*, *ain-srinkhola*, *it-kath*, *bio-potro*, *ukil-barister*, *pir-murid*, *pir-aolia*, *nak-mukh*, *chun-kali*, *shakshi-sabud*, *raja-proja*, *rajniti-orthoniti*, *baksho-petra*, *cinema-bioscope*, *cinema-theater* and *telephone-telegram* in this study.

These *dvandvas* with weak association are seldom used by native speakers of Bangla nowadays.

DVANDVAS with No Association : *Dvandvas* which revealed no association are *pan-tamak*, *dhup-dhuna*, *shorgo-mortyo*, *dhud-ghee*, *dhud-shagu*, *matha-mundu*, *dev-danob*, *it-shurki*, *guru-*

puruhit, deo-thoa, baki-bokea, bot-pustok, pir-poygombor, gari-palki and *raja-ujir* in the present study.

These *dvandvas* with no association survive as lexical pairs and have lost their minimum associative strength between the two elements involved. Therefore, these *dvandvas* are now no more acceptable as *dvandvas*.

The *dvandvas* with the different degrees of association lead us to conclude the following findings :

- (a) Some *dvandvas* are made up of strong association.
- (b) Some *dvandvas* are made up of moderate association.
- (c) Some *dvandvas* are made up of weak association.
- (d) Some *dvandvas* reveal no association between the elements involved.
- (e) The *dvandvas* which reveal no association between the elements involved are just lexical pairs without the connotative relation.
- (f) The stronger the association between the two components of a *dvandva*, the more in use and reversly the weaker the association between the two components of a *dvandva*, the less in use by native speakers of Bangla.

These findings indicate a train of change in the association pertaining to the *dvandvas* and the everchanging phenomena of the connotative meaning network of the language (Lambert, W. E. and Moore, N. : in Lambert, W. E., 1972: p. 207). This phenomena of connotative relationship among the words go in support of the findings of Jenkins and Russell's (1960 : in Lambert, W. E., 1972 : p. 197) study which noted about the changes of associative responses through time and cultural differences.

SHIFTING OF ASSOCIATIVE RESPONSES :

Sometimes, the associative response of a particular stimulus word may shift from one word to another. The first elements of some *dvandvas* as stimulus word appear to be shifted to their

heads to form the new *dvandvas* with new combination. It (brick), *ghari* (car), *rajniti* (politics) and *dhud* (milk) are such first elements which appeared to shift their heads (associative responses) from *kath* (wood), *ghora* (horse), *orthoniti* (economics) and *ghee* (butter) respectively to *balu* (sand), *bari* (house), *durniti* (corruption) and *chint* (sugar). Shifting of heads appeared to take place due to the psychological changes in the semantic field.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

When more than one equally associated responses have been elicited with a single stimulus word, the frequency becomes distributed over all of these different responses. In such a case, an actual association has not been revealed through this WA task. This drawback appears to be a limitation of this study.

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SEMI-PRECIOUS STONE BEADS FROM WARI AND BATESHWAR

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Wari and Bateshwar are two neighbouring villages, situated about 3 km west of the confluence of old Brahmaputra and Arial Kha rivers in Belabo thana of Narshingdi district (Greater Dhaka). The archaeological importance of these villages was first noticed in 1933 by Md. Hanif Pathan, a school teacher. Later his son Md. Habibullah Pathan, an amateur archaeologist took initiative to collect the antiquities and studied them (Pathan, 1989). Artefacts found in these sites are Neolithic celts, pottery, iron implements, punchmark coins, semi-precious stone beads, glass beads, terra-cotta beads, terra-cotta objects, etc. The present paper deals with the semi-precious stone beads found at these villages.

Villages around Wari and Bateshwar like Raingertek, Ujalabo, Abdullanagar, Poradia, Chandipara, Belabo, Kandua, etc. have also yielded large number of semi-precious stone beads (Pathan 1989; Chakravarty, 1992). Beads made of semi-precious stones, glass and terra-cotta are noticed from the beginning of this century in these villages. Villagers have found these beads while ploughing fields, cutting lakes and in rainy season when the surface washes away. Most of the antiquities recovered from these sites along with the beads are stored at the National Museum and Directorate of Archaeology, Government of Bangladesh. Apart from these, a large number of beads are also found with the villagers. Most of the houses have at least one necklace containing hundred beads which they use as rosaries. These beads have amulatic value rather than aesthetic value to

the villagers. They call these stone beads as suleman pathar and strongly believe that these beads save them from evils..

Total 357 beads have been collected by the authors. Of these 208 are agate, 78 carnelian, 37 chert, 6 glass, 7 amethyst, 7 quartz, 6 chalcedony, 5 red jasper and 3 crystal and these are found in different shapes and sizes. The shapes found are disc (137), spherical (80), cylinder (51), long barrel (24), barrel (15), hexagonal (12), truncated bicone (7), cornerless cube (6), truncated convex bicone (5), convex bicone (3), pentagonal (3), triangular (2), square (2), long barrel hexagonal (2) and one each fluted, oblate, annular, lenticular, diamond shape, trapezoid and irregular shape (Table 1).

Altogether twenty one shapes made on eight varieties of semi-precious stone material are identified. Of these, agate (58.26%) is predominant. The second most important raw material is carnelian (21.85%). Agate and carnelian constitute 80.11% of the total number of beads. Among the shapes disc are 38.38%, spherical 22.41%, cylinder 14.29%, barrel and long barrel 10.92%. These shapes are dominant, constitute 86% of the total beads and the remaining shapes are 14%. It reveals that these shapes were easy to produce. A majority of the disc and cylinder shape beads are made of black and white banded agate. Bead makers have chosen one band for the disc shape and two bands for the cylinder shape. Probably they have selected this mineral due to its natural banding to decorate the beads. Most of the spherical and long barrel-shaped beads are made of carnelian. The analysis suggests that the bead makers exhibited a keen sense in selecting the minerals, shapes and skill of cutting semi-precious stones to beautify these beads during the ancient time. (Table 1.).

Table 1. Different shapes and varieties of semi-precious stone beads found at Wari and Bateshwar.

	BBA	WBA	BA	CA	CH	CHA	AM	RJ	QU	CR	GL	TOTAL
Disc	88	42		06	01							137
Cylinder	27	18			04			01	01			051
Barrel	03	04	03	05								015
Long Barrel	03	01		16				01		02	01	024
Truncated bicone	05				02							007
Truncated convex bicone	02	03										005
Spherical			05	50	15	06		02	02			080
Fluted				01								001
Triangular							02					002
Square			02									002
Pentagonal							01				02	003
Hexagonal					10		01				01	012
Long barrel hexagonal							01			01		002
Oblate			01									001
Annular			01									001
Lenticular								01				001
Cornerless cube					01				04		01	006
Convex bicone					03							003
Diamond Shape					01							001
Trapezoid							02					002
Shapeless											01	001
Total	128	68	12	78	37	06	07	05	07	03	06	357

Abbreviations : BBA - Black Banded Agate, WBA - White Banded Agate, BA - Black Agate, CA - Carnelian, CH - Chert, CHA - Chalcedony, AM - Amethyst, RJ - Red Jasper, QU - Quartz, CR- Crystal, GL - Glass.

In the total of 357 beads only eight are etched beads and the remaining are plain. Etched beads are found made of carnelian and agate from a majority of the early historic sites in India. These beads are decorated with different patterns of designs produced by using chemicals. The process of etching beads was first mentioned by Bellasis in 1857. He had found the carnelian industry in a flourishing state at Sehwan in Sind where beads were decorated by using the ingredients like potash, white lead and a common Kirar bush which grows wild in the plains of Sind

and south-western Punjab. Another process of etching beads has been mentioned by W.G.N. van der Sleen (1974). According to him the process of etching was done in India by covering the bead first with wax. The wax is removed where the design is incised. After incising the design in wax, bead is treated with strong alkali to produce white lines or with permanganate to produce black lines. Without chemical analysis and further research it is not possible to say which method had been used for the etched beads found at Wari and Batëshwar. However, beads are found made of black agate (7) and carnelian (1). Designs drawn on beads are white in colour. The shapes are spherical (5), long barrel (2) and disc (1). Spherical and long barrel shape beads are made of agate and disc shape bead is made of carnelian. Spherical shape beads are designed with dots, pentagons and spiral lines around beads. Long barrel shape beads are having the two rows of pentagonal design on the truncated part and two parallel lines on both the ends. Disc shape carnelian bead has one band around the bead. Identical patterns of designs on carnelian and agate are found from the archaeological sites in the Indus and Gangetic valleys (Dikshit 1949) (Map 1.).

Beads are found perforated (338), half-perforated (15) and unperforated (4). Unperforated beads are shaped, ground and polished (Table 2.). So, it is evident that these beads were ground and polished before drilling. The broken perforation line of stone beads also suggests that these beads were drilled from both the sides because, the pressure on drill would cause the bead to break off into fragments. Perforation might have done by bow drill. One drilling platform with a round shape depression in the middle is found where all different shapes and sizes of beads could be fixed for drilling.

Table 2. Finished and partially finished beads found at Wari and Bateshwar

	BBA	WBA	BA	CA	CH	CHA	AM	RJ	QU	CR	GL	TOTAL
Perforated	122	065	009	074	035	005	007	005	007	003	006	338
Half-perforated	006	001	003	003	002	000	000	000	000	000	000	015
Unperforated	000	002	000	001	000	001	000	000	000	000	000	004

Abbreviations : BBA- Black Banded Agate, WBA- White Banded Agate, BA- Black Agate, CA- Carnelian, CH- Chert, CHA- Chalcedony, AM- Amethyst, RJ- Red Jasper, QU- Quartz, CR- Crystal, GL- Glass.

On the basis of unperforated beads found at Wari and Bateshwar, D.K. Chakravarty (1992) has mentioned the site as a manufacturing centre. The occurrence of perforated and unperforated beads from these sites does not suggest that it was a manufacturing centre. Bead manufacturing centre yields not only perforated and unperforated beads in large number but also provide the evidences of raw and waste material which were left behind during fabrication, beads in different stages of fabrication and the tools used for cutting, grinding and polishing, etc. We do not have any evidences mentioned above from Wari and Bateshwar. Out of 357 beads only four beads are unperforated. These unperforated beads cannot be considered as unfinished beads, because they are shaped, ground and polished. The traders of Wari and Bateshwar might have imported all or some of shaped, ground and polished unperforated beads in less price and drilled here in their leisure time to get the maximum profit. The occurrence of drilling platform also supports the view. The available evidences reveal that the area of Wari and Bateshwar could be a trading centre rather than a manufacturing centre.

Besides Wari and Bateshwar the semi-precious stone beads are also found from archaeological sites like Mahasthangarh (Ahmad 1975) and Bangarh (Roy 1983) in Bangladesh. Since there is no source of raw material of which beads are made (Khan 1991) and no evidence of bead industry in Bangladesh, it is quite possible that the early historic people of this region might have imported these stone beads from India. Ancient

Bengal had close social, economic and political contact with Northern India. But there is no stone bead industry in North India during early historic period. In India the earliest stone bead making industry is found in Cambay. Bead industry in Cambay has been working since 3000 B. C. upto the present time (Arkell 1936). The products of Cambay are recovered from Mesopotamia, Syria, Persia, China, Tibet, Indus valley, Gangetic valley and South Indian Megalithic burials (Dikshit 1949, 1952, Sleen 1974, Roy 1983). The evidences of these beads from the above place throw light on trading contacts with Cambay right from 3000 B. C. to early historic time (Sleen 1974). The main sources of semi-precious stones are in the Vindhyan hills and in the Deccan trap of India (Wadia 1975, 1994). The sources are largely exploited by bead making industries of Cambay and Lothal from their existence (Arkell 1936, Rao 1973). It is also evident that during the late phase of NBPW a bead manufacturing industry flourished at Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh and Bharoch in Gujarat which also controlled the internal trade (Roy 1983). The sites in Gangetic valley sites might have imported semi-precious stone beads from Cambay, Lothal, Bharoch and Ujjain, and supplied to Bengal. It is also evident that in the Early phase of NBPW Kaushambi and Rajghat in Uttar Pradesh flourished as glass bead manufacturing centres. Probably, Wari, Bateshwar and other sites of Bangladesh imported glass beads directly from Kaushambi and Rajghat.

It is quite likely that besides the contact with north India, Wari and Bateshwar might have had trading contact with south India too. A large number of plain and etched semi-precious stone beads are found in south Indian archaeological sites such as Kadkal, Kallur, Kondapur, Maski, Arikamedu, Kupgal, Palghat, Paravai, Peyal, Sangankallu, Vellalur, etc. (Wheeler, *et.al.* 1946, Dikshit 1949, 1952, Thaper 1957). Of these Arikamedu in Tamil Nadu state was an important port and had a flourished trade contacts with east India, east Asia and Roman world. (Wheeler, *et.al.* 1946, Agrawal 1982, Singh 1988). The plain beads found at Wari and Bateshwar are similar with those of south Indian plain beads. On this basis one may infer that these sites had

trade contact with south India. Before suggesting this view one should keep it in mind that plain beads of Asia, Europe and Africa are more or less similar with the beads found at Wari, Bateshwar and India.

The etched beads which hold a regional aesthetic taste is an important parameter to throw light on trade contact between Wari, Bateshwar and south India. There is a complete distinction of the patterns of designs of etched beads between north and south India. The patterns of designs of etched beads of north India are barrel shape beads with pentagons and spherical shape beads with pentagons and dots. In south India only two shapes of etched beads found are disc and cylinder. The disc shape beads are decorated with the radial lines near the periphery with additional square, dash or dot in the centre. Some disc shape beads are decorated with radial markings near the periphery but the pattern is divided into two hemispheres by long longitudinal lines. Cylinder shape beads are decorated with one or two rows of chevrons or triangular pattern in the centre with marginal bands at the ends and another pattern is with zonal bands at the sides and row of oblique strokes in the centre (Dikshit 1949). A few evidences are also seen that etched beads of southern group are found in north India and vice-versa. In south India one spherical shape etched bead with pentagonal design of northern group found at Maski (Thaper 1957) and one barrel shape with pentagons of the same group found at Kondapur (Dikshit 1949). While in north India at Kaushambi, a disc shape bead with radial lines and at Brahmanabad in Sind, a cylinder shape bead with zonal bands and chevrons design of southern group are found (Dikshit 1949) (Map 2.). These occurrences are still unexplained. The patterns of designs of etched beads found at Wari and Bateshwar are similar with the northern group but not with southern group which supports that the Wari and Bateshwar had a trading contacts with north India. However, this paper is based on a very limited number of stone beads. It needs further detail study of beads and the associated antiquities to reconstruct the past glory of Wari and Bateshwar.

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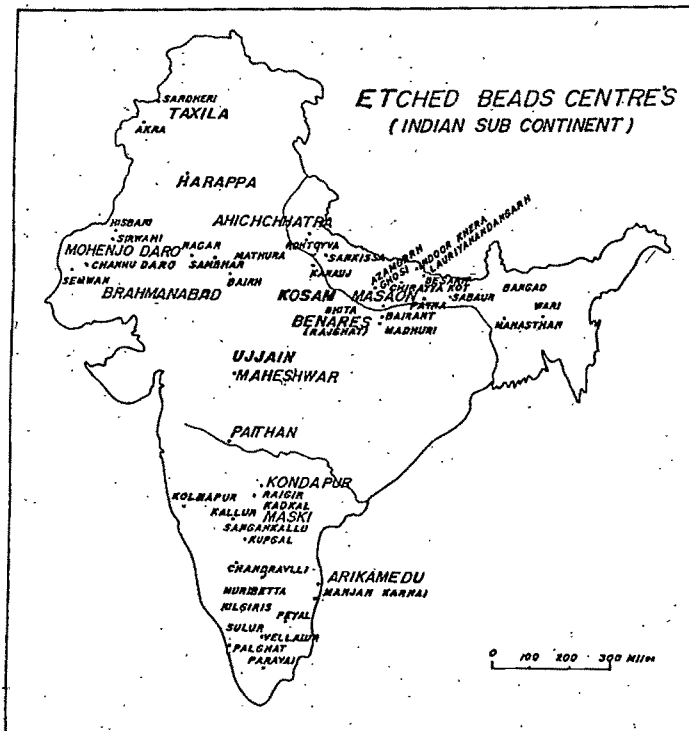
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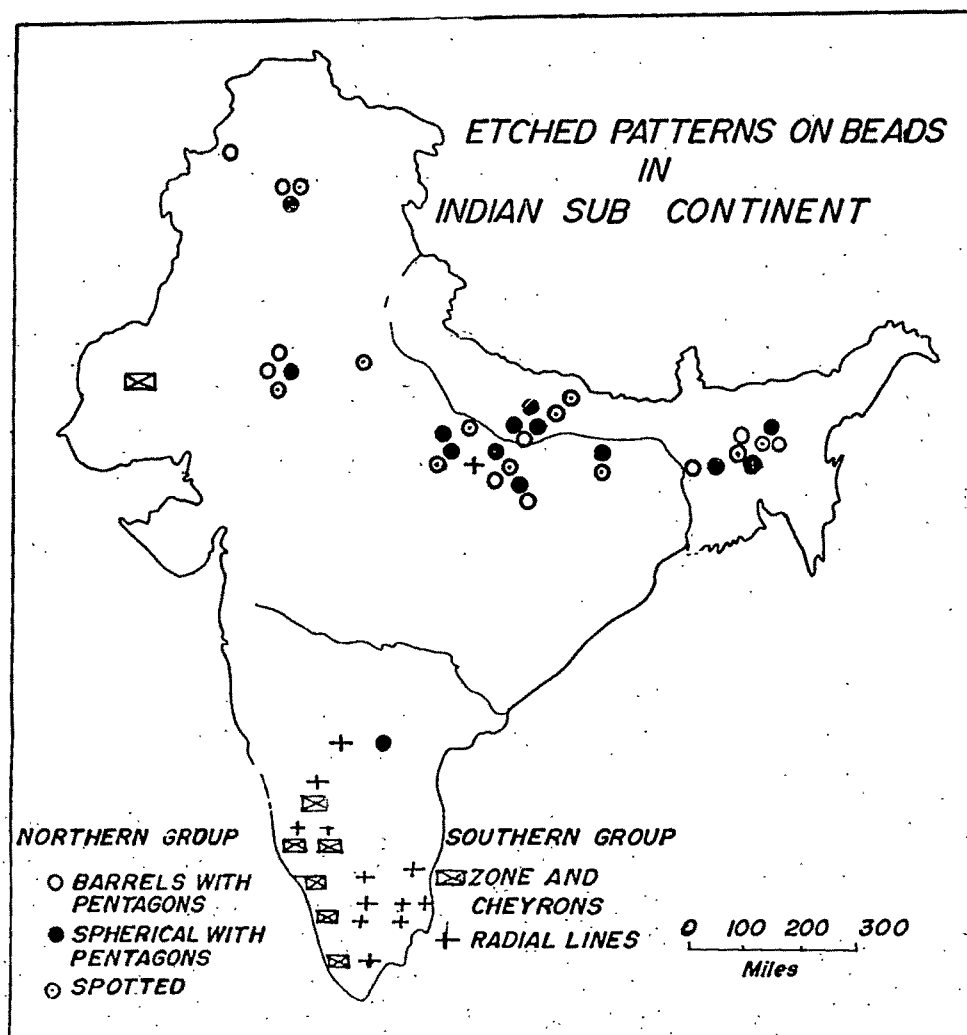
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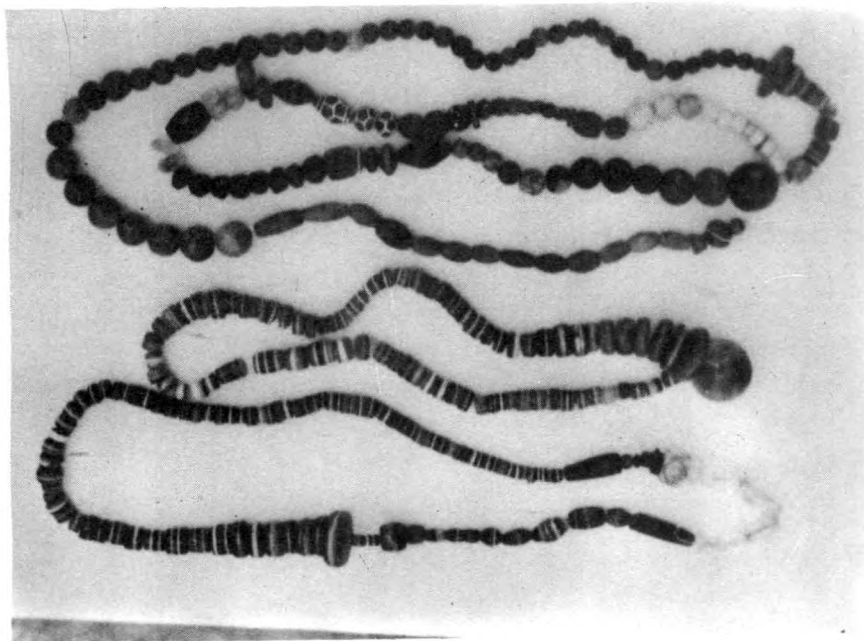
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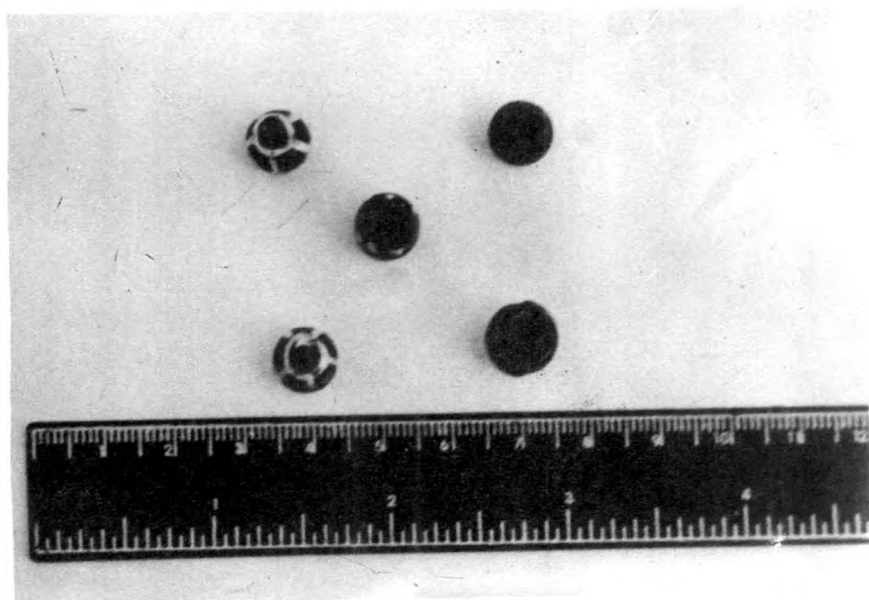
Map 1. : Distribution of Etched Patterns on Beads in Indian Sub-continent (after M.G. Dikshit 1949).



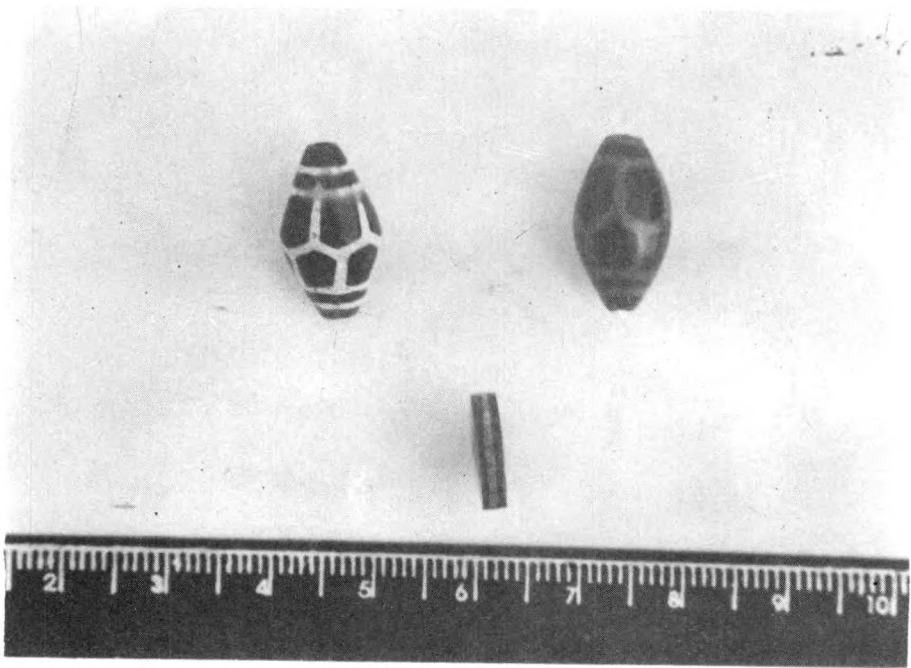
Map 2. Distribution of Etched Beads Sites in Indian Subcontinent (after M.G. Dikshit 1949).



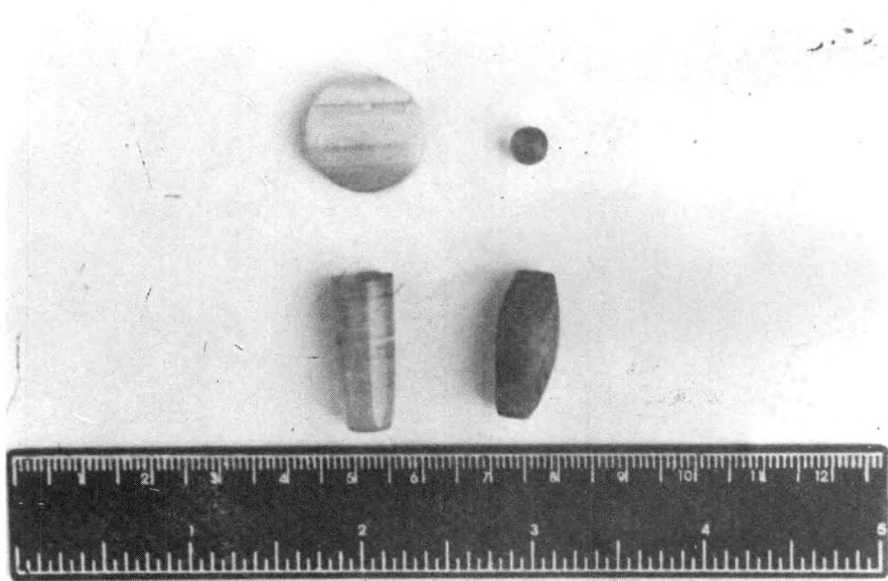
No. 1 — Semi-precious stone beads recovered from Wari-Bateshwar.



No. 2 — Etched Beads.



No. 3 — Etched Beads.



No. 4 — Unperforated finished semi-precious stone beads.



No. 5 — Drilling platform with a round shape depression in the middle.



No. 6 — Drilling platform with bead fixed for

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH : AN INSTRUMENT OR AN INSTITUTION ?

A. T. M. Obaidullah

Introduction

Efficiency and administration usually go hand in hand. If the democratic government aims at efficient governance it has to rely on effective local government machinery. Empirical evidence provides that the countries which have involved the local government for planning and development have been successful in achieving higher economic growth and per capita income, than the countries which have not used local institutions.¹ This view is further corroborated by Oakley², Conyers³ and Siddiquee⁴ in the 1980s and 1990s. Nowadays local government reform has been a phenomenon common across the world with a view to achieving rapid socio-economic development.⁵ Post-war scenario in the Third World countries irrespective of political complexion, is characterized by withdrawing their thrust of development from traditional centralized planning, and placing confidence in decentralized planning/administration as strategy for rapid socio-economic development, especially for those who are living in the rural areas.⁶ "The arguments for decentralization have become so persuasive and apparently convincing that during the last two decades or so most countries have adopted decentralisation policies as part of their development strategy and decentralisation has thus become the 'latest fashion' in development strategy administration".⁷ As a matter of fact, the

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difference of effectiveness of local machinery of government at local level makes the fundamental distinction between a more or less effective government. Hence, most countries of the world, irrespective of their ideological complexion, retain some kind of local government system. In view of the political history, administrative heritage, constitutional commitment, and nature of polity, the local government may be of different varieties, such as, functional, prolectural and decentralized.⁸

The local government system of Bangladesh leaves behind a legacy of more than 200 years, originated with the passage of Chowkidari Panchayat Act, 1870, by the then British Government in India to maintain law and order in the village and to collect taxes for paying salaries of the village Chowkidars. The local government system eventually handed down to Pakistan and India following partition of British in 1947, was the outcome of 36 reform commissions/committees. The local government that evolved in British India was essentially a control mechanism to establish imperial authority over the remote nature population through the local government machinery.

In Pakistan local government remained essentially same until the Basic Democracies (BD) system was introduced by the President's Order No. 18, 1959. The President Ayub Khan declared that BD would not be foisted upon the people from the above, rather it would work from below gradually going to the top — starting from the village level and rising upward like a pyramid both in form and in spirit.⁹ The BD system operated in East Pakistan until its dismemberment in 1971, which were later on denominated as neither 'Basic' nor 'Democracy' by the critics and what London Crown called it "The basic fraud".¹⁰

After independence of Bangladesh, through a sanguinary war of independence in 1971 from the domestic colonial rule of Pakistan, the revolutionary government abolished the Basic Democratic institutions by the President's order on the Dissolution and Administration of Local Bodies (1972) to establish, participative and development oriented local

government system to institutionalize democracy at the grass-root level and evolve people oriented bottom-up and decentralized local government institution in the country. Country's colonial legacy of government structure and organizational cultures that emphasized hierarchical control hampered the development initiative of the people of Bangladesh for development.¹¹ Bangladesh in last 26 years attempted to experiment with two types of local level institutions at the village and thana level during Zia and Ershad regimes respectively. A complaint often made against the government in our country being whatever changes pursued at the local level aimed at political motive of the party in power. In this paper, an attempt is made to examine how far local government in Bangladesh has been institutionalized and help establish institutionalize democracy from the grass root level.

Institutionalization of Local Government : A Concept

Local Government machinery may be used as tool or as institution of a country depending on the political motivation of government at the helm of state authority. If the local level units are merely used to execute the policies of the central government below the headquarter, it is considered to be a tool of national government. Again, it can serve as an institution, built on the foundation of set rules and regulations, and can assume a definite shape through experience and continuity over time, capable of functioning independently of central government, in the area delineated for it.¹² The natural tendency, today, is towards centralization, because the old-time obstacles to its progress, such as distance, difficulties of communication have been largely removed. The consequence is that today if there is to be decentralization, it has to be deliberately arranged and maintained through legal and constitutional basis. The central authority has to perform to some extent, an act of self-abnegation, and delegate a wide range of powers to its subordinate unit at the local level.

The 'institution' is a sociological term with different connotations. "An institution is a formal, recognized, estab-

lished, and stabilized way of pursuing some activity in society".¹³ As MacIver has defined it as "an established form or condition of procedure characteristic of group activity".¹⁴ E. C. Hayes looked upon institution as "sets of activities which a society adopt as its deliberately accepted method of attaining a deliberately approved end."¹⁵ L. T. Hobhouse argues that the institution "covers (1) recognized and established usages governing certain relations of men, (2) an entire complex of such usages and the principles governing it and (3) the organization (if such exists) supporting such complex".¹⁶ "Institutions are aspects of the structure of social system. A cognate concept of process, institutionization, is also common. This refers to the process by which a norm or pattern of behaviour has come to be expected of those occupying given structures in a society".¹⁷ Institutionalisation is the process by which practice, procedure and rules are established or take the definite shape aimed at. In the context of local government, institutionalisation means establishment of rules, regulation and constitutional provision, if any, in its sphere of operation, instead of whims and caprice of individual ruler at the helm of state authority. Any organization could be transformed into an institution while it is built on the set rules, regulations and if necessary on the constitutional foundation, instead of being a brain child of any intellect person.¹⁸ In case of local government certain control by the central government may, of course, be necessary, but should not be politically motivated to satiate individual aspiration of any person in political power. Institutionalization process, of Local Government of developed or developing countries particularly where decentralized local government in operation presupposes existence of certain conditions precedent to it, such as : appropriate constitutional/legal basis, its own staff, finance, defined central-local relations, system of regular elections and autonomy/independence of central control. Frequent changes with political motive of the regimes in power results in weakening and eventual destruction of institutionalization of local government.¹⁹ This paper attempts to highlight the conditions essential for institutionalization of local government

and to indicate the extent they are existent in our country.

Constitutional/Legal Arrangements of Local Government in Bangladesh

The constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh incorporates a number of provisions for instituting local government in the Fundamental Principles of state policy and elsewhere in the constitution. Article 9 of the state policy of the constitution unequivocally states that :

The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given, as far as possible to peasants, workers, and women.²⁰

Article 10 formulates that "Steps shall be taken to ensure participation of women in all spheres of national life." Article 11 of the Fundamental Principles of State Policy declares that :

The Republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedom and respect for dignity and worth of the human rights shall be guaranteed and in which effective participation by the people through their elected representatives in administration at the levels shall be ensured.²¹

Chapter III of Bangladesh Constitution has enshrined specific provisions for constituting Local Government in Articles 59 and 60 which read as follows.

Art. 59(1) Local Government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to bodies, composed of persons elected in accordance with law.

(2) Every body such as is referred to in clause (1) shall, subject to this constitution and any other law, perform within the appropriate administrative unit such functions as shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament, which may include functions relating to —

(a) administration and the work of public officers ;

- (b) the maintenance of public officers ;
- (c) the preparation and implementation of plans relating to public services and economic development.²²

Art 60. For the purpose of giving full affect to the provision of Article 59 Parliament shall, by law, confer powers on the local government bodies referred to in the article; including power to impose taxes for local purposes, to prepare their budgets and maintain funds.²³

The important issue in the determination of the status of local government being the mode of its establishment. Should it be created by legislative enactment or by order of the executive? If local government is established by legislation, it will enjoy greater security and freedom than if it is established by executive order. Both the system seems to be extreme. A more workable plan would be where the establishment and control are left in the hands of the executive but the legislature keeps/watch control over number/tier of units, location freedom of action and financial position.

Development/Reorganization of Local Government in Bangladesh Mujib Era

Ever since independence of Bangladesh every government in successive regimes, has apparently undergone relentless efforts to refurbish colonial local government and to evolve a participative system based on the spirit of devolution of authority. With a view to achieving this end the Awami league (AL) government at the initial phase of independence, first abolished the BD institutions, which lost coherence and usefulness in as independent democratic country. Under the President's Order on Dissolution and Administration of Local Bodies, all persons who held offices of Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen, Members and administrators ceased to hold office. And the powers and functions of the local councilors were to be performed by the government officials.²⁴ This measure aroused a great deal of suspicion in the minds of ordinary people as it

seemed to be against the legitimate popular demand of elected local government of the people. Later, however, an explanatory handout made it clear that this arrangement was temporary and government was taking steps to hold elections to the local bodies as soon as possible.²⁵ Meanwhile, AL government appointed a major administrative reform committee named Administrative and Service Reorganization Committee (ASRC), 1972 to streamline administrative structure at all levels of the country, so far as the local government is concerned, ASRC strongly argued for the democratization of administration at all levels. It called for an increasing devolution of authority to the elected local government and clearly delineated the areas of responsibility between the national and local governments. The committee was of the opinion that there should not be any fixity or unalterable rigidity about the devolution of functions from the national to the local government bodies. The guiding principle was that a service should be administered by a local body that can administer effectively.²⁶

During the three year's stay in power in the first phase of independence AL did nothing but to hold elections to the UPs in 1973. The valuable and far reaching recommendations of the ASRC could not be implemented because of the socio-political and economic compulsions of the regime. By the time (October 1973) the report was submitted, the AL lost much of its popularity and the beloved Bangabandhu became target of outraged public.²⁷ In fact, all political oppositions, particularly, left organizations, spearheaded by JSD launched overt armed movement to oust AL by means, fair or foul.²⁸ National economy came down to ever lowest level, inflation rocketted sky high, unprecedented famine in 1974 claimed several thousand lives.²⁹ In this ominous politico-economic situation AL resorted to repressive measures to halt the process of mass alienation and eventually enacted Fourth Amendment to the Constitution and establish One Party BAKSAL rule, which the regime designated as the Second Revolution. Fourth Amendment to the Constitution brought about a radical change in the structure of hitherto existing local government system. Constitutional

provisions, 59 and 60 relating to the establishment of the local government were dropped and was replaced by District Administration Act of 1975.

Under the District Administration Act, 1975, the Division and Subdivisions as tiers of local government were declared abolished, and sub-divisions were converted into districts, to be governed by the District Governors. The District Governors were to be appointed by the President from amongst the members of the National Party BAKSAL, and hold office during the pleasure of the President. This Act made district governors the chief executive officers in charge of general administration of the district with a comprehensive list of functions. Governors of the districts were to bridge the gap between central government and the local level administration.³⁰ But the one party monolithic BAKSAL along with its new administrative mechanism was crushed before it could take off the ground following the August Coup of 1975 ending up the first phase of AL government under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Zia Regime

Emergence of General Zia following the ouster of Sheikh Mujib government ushered in a new era of experiment in the area below the national level, particularly at the village level. Henceforth Union Parishad started loosing importance in subsequent regimes for establishing parallel institutions and withdrawing some of the functions from the jurisdiction of Union Parishad. But nothing was done to provide for an elected local government at the thana and district levels. At thana level, the position of Thana Parishad was made even worse by two politically motivated decisions, namely : creation of parallel body, named *Thana Development Committee* (TDC) ; (b) introduction of higher scales of pay to a number of the Thana level officers as compared to the Circle Officer.³¹

The striking feature of General Zia's administration was the constitution of Swanirvar Gram Sarkar (SGS). In the provisions 85 and 86 of the Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance,

1976, government was empowered to constitute *Gram Parishad* for the overall development of villages under each union.³² In an amendment the term 'Village' was dropped and *Swanirvar Gram Sarkar Act Ordinance* was promulgated in 1980. Under this Act, SGS consisted of one Gram Pradhan, two female members, and nine other members, representing the different groups in the village. Gram Pradhan and other members were chosen in a meeting on the consensus evolved among the members of the village, whose names appeared on the electoral roll. Among the members, one was to be appointed Secretary to the SGS by the Gram Pradhan.³³ Of a comprehensive list of functions Gram Sarkar was called upon to perform four main functions such as (1) increasing food production, (2) eradicating illiteracy, (3) birth control and family planning ; and (4) law and order. Gram Sarkar was not empowered to collect fund to discharge its responsibilities.³⁴ Gram Sarkar was politically pampered to such an extent that it considered itself only next to the national government in importance. But the institution of SGS was abolished with assassination of President Zia and eclipse of BNP rule following takeover of military government by General Ershad.

At the operational stage SGS was found to be totally an ineffective and superficial organization which had no bearing upon the development of village community and influencing decision making from the grass-root level. The politico-administrative analysts opined that introduction of SGS created a further deadlock at the union level, for it acted as a rival body to the Union Parishad. A study³⁵ in three SGS of Mymensingh, Montala, Colipar and Rainagar unveiled the hollowness of the operation of SGS and people's participation in the local level development activities. This study revealed that in some village SGS had even no office building of their own, held very few meetings where all member of the Sarkar were not present, villagers did not know the time and place of meeting and the agenda of discussion. In times of crisis the villagers used to turn to the traditional village leaders, not the SGS. Gram Pradhan was occasionally approached as he belonged to the traditional village

leaders. The SGS could still be dominated by village elite who previously controlled local institutions and distributed favours / benefits. The Committee for Administrative Reform/ Reorganization (CARR). 1982, constituted by the successor, General Ershad underscored the following reasons for the failure of SGS.

1. The Gram Sarkar was set up in isolation from the mainstream of the local government and no linkage was established with the existing local institutions on the Union Parishads.
2. The Possibility of establishing or developing any indirect or informal relationship between Gram Sarkar and the Union Parishad was also closed by disqualifying the sitting members and Chairman of the Union Parishads to be chosen as office bearers of the SGS.
3. Gram Sarkars were introduced without preparing the ground for the same and expanded to the whole country much too rapidly.
4. The introduction of Gram Sarkar was used for political purpose and there was interference by the ruling party in choosing the office bearers of the SGS.
5. No training was provided either to the organizing committee composed of officials of the thana level or the office bearers of the SGS for discharging their functions. Very few knew what the next step was.
6. No supervision was done by the government over the functioning of the Gram Sarkars. In fact, no capable machinery for the necessary supervision ever existed.
7. Strong local organizations like youth bodies were created and vested with unprecedented powers which only subverted the authority of existing institutions and that of SGS.³⁶

Decentralization Scheme of General Ershad

Reasons underlying peaceful coup d'etat by General Ershad in March, 1982 were to check wide spread corruption in high echelon of administration, tap down public discontents and get rid of an ineffective chief executive, unable to act decisively. In addition to his reform measures at the macro level of bureaucracy through Martial Law Committee (MLC), he keenly concentrated in the local level reform. He constituted a committee named Committee for Administrative Reform /Reorganization (CARR) (1982) "to recommend an appropriate, sound and effective administrative system based on the spirit of devolution and objective of taking administration nearer to the people." The CARR in the process of examination of the existing local government system identified some major inadequacies, which are :

- (a) Weak local government system rendered weaker by lack of appropriate political direction ;
- (b) Weakening of traditional administrative and representative institutions at different levels of administration ;
- (c) Creation of parallel political and administrative institutions leading to conflict of jurisdiction ; and
- (d) Reluctance on the part of the political authority to devolve power to the representative institutions at the local levels.³⁷

The Committee held the view that in order to ensure people's participation in the development process, the following measures should be taken into account :

- (a) Elected local government bodies should possess effective authority ;
- (b) Elected local government at district, thana and union levels should be concurrently supported by decentralized planning, and should implement projects of local importance ;

- (c) Adoption of the policy of non-interference by the central government in matters which were within the purview of the local government ; and
- (d) Dedicated and trained civil servants who could live with and work among the people.³⁸

In view of the objective conditions, the CARR made comprehensive recommendations to establish a network of decentralized local government system of mutual dependence/relations on the basis of devolution of authority. The Committee suggested democratization of administration from UP to ZP wherein elected Chairman was to be the chief coordinator with adequate staff and financial support and the authority to establish control over officials working at the local parishads.

Unlike the previous regimes the Ershad Government not only accorded priority to local government reforms, but also took immediate measures to implement major recommendations of the CARR. A high powered National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reorganization/Reform (NICARR) was appointed with wide range of responsibilities to facilitate the implementation of CARR recommendations. The implementation of one recommendation of the CARR resulted in the establishment of Upazila Administration by Local Government (Thana Parishad and Thana Administrative Reorganization) (Second Amendment) Ordinance 1983.

Organization of Upazila Parishad

Upazila administration was run by the Upazila Parishad (UZP) headed by a Chairman, elected directly by the people of the Upazila. UZP consisted of :

- (a) Chairman ;
- (b) Representative members ;
- (c) Three women members ;
- (d) Official members ;

- (e) Chairman of the Upazila Central Cooperative Association within the Upazila ; and
- (f) One nominated member.³⁹

UZP consisted of two categories of members, voting and non-voting. The representative members had the right to vote. The official members representing government departments, corporations and agencies had no voting right. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) who belonged to BCS (Admn.) acted as the principal staff officer to the Chairman of UZP, and assisted him in the planning and implementation of all development activities.

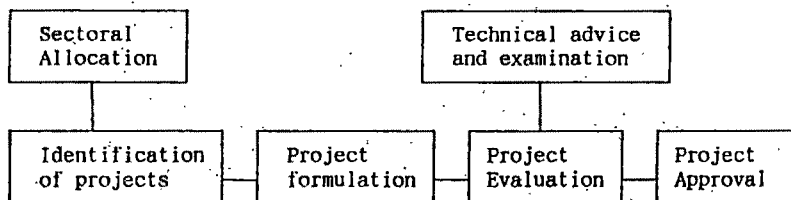
The UZP was made the focal point of all development activities. To facilitate the process of decentralization, as envisaged in the CARR, previous Thana Parishad and Thana development Centre were abolished and the responsibilities of development activities belonging to them were transferred to the UZP.

Planning Process of Upazila

The striking feature of Upazila administration was the attempt to introduce a bottom-up planning in place of long established unrealistic top-down planning approach, which in fact, widened the elite-mass gap and feigned to bring about qualitative change in the life-style of rural mass. The UZP was considered to be the lowest unit of planning, entrusted with the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Upazila Five Year and Upazila Annual Development Plan. Moreover, UZP was required to assist supervise and guide Union Parishads in their activities of indentifying projects and implementing plans.

Before the introduction of UZ system, these functions were performed jointly by concerned government agencies and representatives of the people at the TDC. To prepare pragmatic and realistic plans the Parishad was required to undertake socio-economic surveys and feasibility studies concerning the Upazila in order to enable itself to identify specific problems.

Upazila planning involves five essential stages (a) Plan preparation ; (b) process of financing ; (c) implementation ; (d) coordination ; (e) evaluation and monitoring. The steps involved in the Upazila Planning process are shown below :



Suggested Plan Procedure

Source : BIJSS Journal, Vol. 7, 1986, p. 151.

The Chairman of UZP was required to brief Parishad members about available fund for each sector and sub-sectors in a special meeting and place request for coming up with proposed development schemes for consideration and approval of the Parishad. The representative members of the Union Parishad on return to their respective unions would prepare proposals in consultation with their ward members. The UZP held a general meeting and of necessary special meeting for thorough discussion before final approval of the scheme. The projects proposed either by the Union Parishads or UZP Chairman were selected by Project Selection Committee and then submitted for deliberation at the meetings of UZP. A number of committees at Upazila such as Upazila Planning Committee, Upazila, Upazila Project Committee, Evaluation Committee, etc. were constituted to study feasibility, review and monitor the implementation of Upazila development plans.

To undertake development activities as envisaged in the CARR 18 nation building departments were transferred to the UZP and higher level government department officials were posted on deputation. And for getting development activities accomplished, 50 lakh Taka was allocated to each Upazila for one each financial year as per suggestion of the NICARR.

Second Phase of BNP Rule : Khaleda Zia Regime

The collapse of General Ershad in the face of mass upsurge in 1990 helped BNP under the leadership of Khaleda Zia ascend to the state authority. Few months after assuming state authority in the second Phase, BNP government scrapped the Upazila system on the ground that it had not attained noticeable progress in socio-economic development and institutionalize local government from the grassroot through people's participation. Moreover, UZP indulged in corruption and misuse of money in unproductive sector. In order to conduct a fresh inquiry into the state of local government a commission, under the Chairmanship of Nazmul Huda, Information Minister of the government, was constituted in November 1991 with the task to recommend measures which would match the cherished objectives of institutionalizing democracy from the grassroot level, and introducing local/rural people to the development activities of the country.⁴⁰ The commission recommended for the reorganization of Union Parishad at the village level and District Council at the District and making municipalities and City Corporations more representative in urban areas.⁴¹ Elected Councils of the local level were made responsible to the people for their actions and policies. Having realized the role of villages in socio-economic upliftment, the village was considered to be the fundamental unit of UPs and recommended the creation of Gramshava, comprised of the villages of the UP. Gramshava consisted of 10 members belonging to different strata of the community, elected directly by the people of the village whose names appeared on the electoral roll of the village. Under the reorganized local government structure, the UP was considered to be the focal point of local level planning with special emphasis on the village to initiate all development activities. The Union Parishad was made responsible to and its budget and projects were to be approved by the Gramshava.⁴²

The recommendations of the Nazmul Huda Commission remained unimplemented during the tenure of the government. In fact, after two years following the result of a bye-election, a countrywide movement was launched against the government by

all political oppositions to make provision for holding next elections under a neutral caretaker government. BNP government initially did not pay attention to this demand, but eventually it was forced to step down under the pressure of reality.

Profile of Local Government in Bangladesh as an Institution

The transformation of local government organization into an institution pre-sees certain conditions already referred to in the preceding paragraphs. The following discussion attempts to trace out the state of local government as an institution.

Constitutional/Legal Position

Despite incorporation of provisions relating to establishing representative local government in the principles of state policy and in other provisions in Part III of the constitution, the local government institution is yet to gain ground in our country. One of the main reasons underlying this fugitive state of local government is perhaps the ambivalent attitude of the government towards the constitution in respect of establishing local government institutions. Fourth Amendment to the constitution dropped the Articles 59 and 60 which were restored in the Fifth Amendment later on. However, real attitude of the government did not change. The tendency of government to change local institution at the local level with every change of government is evident in Bangladesh ever since independence. The frequent changes not only retarded the growth and strength of local institution at any level (in Gram or Thana) but also cast doubt in the mind of the ordinary people about the political motive of government in constituting local level institutions. No mention as to the name and type of local institution that could be established at any particular level, in the constitution, left the government with free hand to undertake different experiments, allegedly built up with the objective of satisfying political ambition of the regime in power.⁴³ Instead of relying on field level information and

consensus among politicians/academics, changes in the local government have been made by executive fiat, through ordinances. The local government institutions so far tried in our country did not grow from the ground out of necessity, but imposed from the top as brainchild of ruling power. This has jeopardized the prospect of local level tier to grow as an institution. Further damage is done to some existing institutions by declaring one institution the focal point of all development activities as were the case while Gram Sarkar and Upazila Administration were on trial during Zia and Ershad regimes respectively.⁴⁴

Personnel

Competent and trained personnel are necessary for institutionalisation of local government institution, to be capable of functioning independently in their sphere of activities by their own staff. In this respect, Section 31 of the Local Government (Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Reorganization) Ordinance 1982 laid down that Parishad may appoint such officers and employees as it deems necessary to assist in the discharge of its functions for such terms and conditions as may be prescribed.⁴⁵ But Upazila administration was manned by officials recruited by the central government, some of them belonged to Bangladesh Civil Service. The arrangement was uncongenial to autonomous position of UZP and institutionalization of local government for two reasons : First, deputed government officials were loyal to the national government, second, UZP had no power to take disciplinary action against deputed officials.⁴⁶ Moreover, conflict between the deputed officials and UZP generated on two grounds : First, respective departmental head at the district level continued to hold control over the officials of the UZP. Although UZP officials worked under the direction of the Upazila Chairman, their Annual Confidential Report (ACR) needed to be countersigned by the respective departmental heads at the district level. The promotion and transfer of deputed officials were retained in the

hands of departmental heads. This created a double allegiance of Upazila officials who had to serve two masters. The second concerned the overall responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) for coordination, inspection, supervision within his jurisdiction. According to the guidelines for utilization by UZP of the development assistance provided by the national government through ADP, the DC had the power to inspect development activities and send his opinion, advice and suggestions to Upazila Chairman, Divisional Commissioner, and if necessary to draw the attention of the government he could send the copies of the same to the Cabinet Division or other concerned Ministries/ Divisions/ Agencies.⁴⁷ Though the Chairman of the UZP was expected to be the chief coordinator of all development activities he never attained this position in the face of coordinating power of the DC and relation of the UNO with the Deputy Commissioner. In this structural-functional position the UNO considered the DC his real master for all purposes which was opposed to the principle of autonomy and his responsibility to Chairmen of UZP as envisaged in the CARR. In this regard Hugh Tinker opined that "Indian and Burmese local government has lacked the guidance of public men or devoted servants which enlivened English authorities. As the higher administration, or ministerial office in national or provincial politics offered new opportunities to the leading men of affairs, so the numbers interested in local matters fell away."⁴⁸

Finance and Planning

In respect of finance and planning the position of UZP was very precarious. Theoretically the UZP had power to levy taxes, rates and fees from Jalmahals, street lightings, specified hats-bazars, fair, exhibitions etc. But the revenue amassed from the sources had no impact on the fund required for Upazila development activities. As a matter of fact, the whole scheme of Upazila development was dependent on government grants. This is not a new phenomenon. Rather, local authorities in this

subcontinent "never enjoy (genuine) greater resources : improvement could only be provided a distribution of national income, which local body were neither competent nor willing to carry out."⁴⁹

Whatever was the objective of the CARR so far as the bottom-up planning was concerned, in practice, it remained substantially same as had been traditionally. A study in 12 Upazilas of 12 districts demonstrated that in many of the Upazilas Upazila Project Selection Committee (UZPSC) was not even constituted. And where constituted the committee members did not go to the Union or village for project identification.⁵⁰ The representative members in collaboration with UNO got their scheme passed. An officer was of the opinion that "decisions are taken by the Chairman in the chamber of UNO. The Parishad is nothing but a forum for legalizing those decisions."⁵¹ Official records and information received from 30 schemes established that in almost 80 percent cases of project initiation people had no concern with it.⁵² This had been the situation because of the inadvertent attitude of the people to get into arduous planning process and also because of the insignificant position of the representative members vis-a-vis bureaucratic preponderance in UZP. For efficient and quick disposal of business several committees were constituted at Upazila. But the position of representative member vis-a-vis bureaucratic member is cited in the Table to make the picture conceivable. Thus from the whole structural functional position of Upazila administration remained essentially a system which had apparently representative bottom with deeply entrenched bureaucratic top defeating whole purpose of administrative decentralization and people's participation in the development process.

Table — 1

Name of Committees	Non-bureaucratic Representation including UZP Chairman and NGO leaders (%)	Bureaucratic Representation UNOs and departmental officers	Total
1. Food For Works Coordination Committee	40.00	60.00	100
2. Tender Committee	0.00	100.00	100
3. Evaluation Committee	42.86	57.14	100
4. Water Supply and Sanitation Committee	34.00	66.00	100
5. Anti-Smuggling Committee	29.00	71.00	100
6. Revenue Committee	50.00	50.00	100
7. Health and Family Planning Committee	25.00	75.00	100
8. Accomodation Committee	14.00	86.00	100
9. Education Committee	27.14	72.86	100
10. Roads and Building Committee	50.00	50.00	100
11. Finance Committee	20.00	80.00	100
12. Agriculture Development Committee	22.23	77.77	100
13. Anti-Crime Committee	50.00	50.00	100
14. Conciliation Committee	50.00	50.00	100
15. Irrigation Committee	25.00	75.00	100
16. Vulnerable Group Feeding Committee	46.16	53.84	100
17. Training Committee	9.00	91.00	100

Source : Official records of Burichang Upazila. Cited in Mahbubur Rahman, Bureaucratic Response to Administrative Decentralization : A Study of Bangladesh Civil Service, 1989, p. 245.

Election

Twenty five years of independence of Bangladesh witnessed the government attitude to disband representative institutions at the local level and to replace it by administrators, after every change in the power structure. It appeared to be easy for government to create foothold at the local level through administrators and destroy support based constructed by previous regime. Government go for election democratization only when the fragile support base seem to be shifting their allegiance to the regime in power. The tendency of political oppositions/village leaders, is evident from the long experience since BD system that local leaders prefer to be beneficiary of the

party in power than to be underdogs with commitments to any particular political ideology. Hence, elections to local council, particularly at local level rarely happen, which does in fact, help institutionalize local government. Rather, it help promote their self-interest and the party in power to ascend and establish control over remote peripheral area of the country.

Direct Government Control

Besides field level hierarchical control and domination of bureaucracy in the operational stage of Upazila, the national government retained complete control so far as the general supervision and coordination in the name of compliance with central government's policies. If the government was satisfied that anything done or intended to be done by the UZP was inconsistent/contrary to the national policy, the government was authorized by order to

- (a) quash the proceedings,
- (b) suspend the execution of any resolution passed or made by the Parishad,
- (c) prohibit the doing of anything proposed to be done, and
- (d) require the Parishad to take such action as may be specified.⁵³

The government, either of its own or on the basis of application of any person, could conduct an inquiry into the affairs of the Parishad or take such remedial measures as warranted by the findings of inquiry.⁵⁴ After such an inquiry of the government was satisfied that Parishad was unable to administer its affairs or meet its financial obligations, could supersede the Parishad by notification in the official gazette for a period not exceeding 180 days.⁵⁵ Moreover, the National Planning Commission had firm grip over the activities of Upazila on the form of providing guidelines, fixing allocations and monitoring projects. According to Local Government Ordinance 1982, the national government had the following control :

Any development plans to be prepared by the Upazila Parishad requires the sanction of the national government. Government determines the manner in which the plan shall be financed, executed and supervised.⁵⁶

Thus considering the whole scenario at the operational level of Upazila and SGS it is hardly an overstatement that tiers below national level had any autonomy or independence as a local government institution to perform its activities independently as it should have been.

Second Phase of AL Rule Strengthening Local Government

AL staged a comeback to the helm of state authority after 21 years of the August coup of 1975 through a free and fair election under a caretaker government in June 1996 and appointed a committee under the chairmanship of advocate Rahmat Ali (MP) to refurbish local government system of the country. The committee inquired into the existing local government system and suggested ways and means to democratize local government at all levels and suggested a four-tier local government system — 'Gram' at the village level, Union, Thana and District Councils, to institutionalize democracy at the grass root level and establish viable local government institution in the country. Having considered the objective conditions, the Committee recommended following measures for strengthening local government of the country as an institution.

(a) Manpower

Under the proposed Local Government system there shall be two categories of officials, namely : local government's own staff and officials of transferred departments of the government. The Commission is of the opinion, since officials of relevant government departments shall be deputed to the respective Parishad of local government, the increase of own staff is not rightway necessary. For the effective disposal of business, the efficiency of both deputed officials and own staff of the parishads

have to be increased and the orientation changed. For motivation, efficiency and orientation to the new responsibilities training should be imparted to all concerned as soon as possible. At the same time the representative members should also be imparted training on short term basis in the areas of management, supervision, planning, budgeting, mass contact, coordination, accounting, taxation and project preparation [R. Ali Report, 1997].

(b) Participation and Accountability

Since the proposed local government has different tiers spread from Gram to the District level, both direct and indirect mode of participation should be pragmatic. But the character and type of participation may be different for different initiatives in view of objective conditions and reality. Accountability may automatically be ensured if the decisions taken reflect the hopes and aspirations and demand of the local people. In strengthening the local government, the principles of participation and accountability should be ensured on priority basis [R. Ali Report, 1997 : 12].

(c) Mutual Relations

Representative institutions are not subordinate to any institution up in the hierarchy. But, since local level institutions constitute a network/nexus which have oneness of objectives, they should develop a relations of mutual support and dependence. Coordination among the local level unit vis-a-vis cooperation is essential, absence of which not only waste valuable time but also cause improper use of scarce national resources [R. Ali Report, 1997:22].

(d) Relation with central government

Three fundamental responsibilities that have been transferred to the local government under Article 59 of the constitution from the central government, determines the central-local

relations. Having allegiance to the commitment of democratic administration and hopes and aspirations of the people as enshrined in the constitution, the central-local relationship should be permanently established.

(e) Relations with MPs

Despite the MPs elected from their respective constituencies to enact laws in Jatiya Sangsad, they discuss various problems of development relating to their areas and show eagerness to implement development plans in cooperation with different ministries, as part of their commitment to the electorate. The MPs should be given the advisory functions to their respective areas of administration i.e. zila/upazila/union keeping in mind their status and role in national politics. The respective parishad will act in consultation and aware them of the activities of the parishads. Honorable MPs will render their advice in project selection, implementation and overall development of their areas.

(f) Local Government Commission

Like Election Commission, the need for constituting a Local Government Commission, independent of executive control for the supervision, review, control and monitoring for local government units has long been admitted. The proposed Commission not only in safeguarding autonomy but also can do much for strengthening their structural-functional position.

Enactment/Amendment

New legislation has to be made to create provision for constituting new local government institution in the areas where there is not local institution as such. Gram Parishad is a new tier, though it is not said to be a full-fledged local institution. Nevertheless new legislation is necessary to give effect to it. Under the Gram Parishad enactment, provision should be so made that its composition, area, election/

nomination and responsibility be complementary to the Union Parishad. Laws/Ordinance relating to Zila parishad and union parishad are in existence and several amendments have been made to cope with the objective conditions. New legislation has to be enacted and amendment to the existing Ordinance/Law have to be made in a way so that they do not contradict each other. A permanent Local Government Commission or Council should be constituted by law to supervise, control coordinate the activities of various local level institutions in the country [R. Ali Report, 1997 : 24].

Conclusion

Local Government of Bangladesh leaves behind a long history of more than two hundred years, handed down by Pakistan, originating in British India experimenting in Pakistan before being handed over to Bangladesh in 1972. But unfortunately it has not yet assumed institutional shape. In the last 25 years local government units in Bangladesh particularly at the village and Thana levels have undergone several experimentation in every successive regimes in the name assuring people's participation and institutionalization of democracy at the grassroot level. But no institution was allowed sufficient time to be institutionalized through trial and error, discarded on the ground of corruption and unnecessary huge expenditure in unproductive sector. Moreover, local institutions have not grown from within, rather foisted from the top. Local government institutions, upazila Parishad in this study, was not accorded freedom of action to the representative elements, adequate staff support of its own, fund, and non-interference of government which are condition precedent to the institutionalization of local government. Despite constitutional, legal commitment, local institutions are created by executive fiat and scrapped by individual whims. The recent tendency to declare one particular institution as focal point of development, diminish other institutions in importance, unplanned creation of new institution create parallel administration, problem of double allegiance, sometimes

engaged in elbowing out each other, instead of concentrating on development activities through mutual independence. For failure political elements blame the bureaucracy and the bureaucracy blames the politicians. But the real issue of national development is lost in the political bureaucratic insight. This is what has happened in Bangladesh since 1972. As district tier of local government has not been revived since independence of Bangladesh, a real consensus is necessary to build up as to which tier should be accorded the most importance. This should be done irrespective of political consideration, viz. no matter whichever succeeds in central power local institutions should be allowed to continue with its policies and programmes over the years. Since institutionalization is a long transformatory process, it must be allowed time to demonstrate/testify its operational worth. To keep up with pace of time, necessary amendment/enactment may be made in the organization and procedure of work, but not be discarded abruptly by individual whims. For this purpose, commitment of government and support of the local and enlightened masses are preconditions to keep the institutionalization process alive amidst resistance/challenge from any quarter. In this regard, unless government is strongly committed to local government effectiveness through uninterrupted continuation, mere recommendations of committees/ commissions will result in nothing. And the local government that originated in British India as an instrument of control over the remote native population, shall remain as it is, as an instrument of control over the remote native population, shall remain as it is, as an instrument for executing political intentions of the central government or any political party that comes to power.

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POLITICIZATION OF TRADE UNIONS : ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN BANGLADESH PERSPECTIVE

Md. Abu Taher

1. Theoretical Framework

Trade unions are organised by workers to solve their problems created by modern industry. They are voluntary associations of workers formed to promote and protect their interests by collective endeavour and constitute an integral part of the relationship between employers and the employed. They engage in bargaining with the employers to ensure better working condition, fair wages, security of job etc. for their members. It also defends them against any encroachment, injustice and exploitation by their employers. According to Sydney Webb and Beatrice (1910), "A trade union is a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives." Allen (1971) mentioned that trade unionism is an attempt by otherwise relatively powerless individual employees to rectify the power imbalance. It is a substitute for individual action and is an integral part of the relationship between the buyers and sellers of labour power. Flanders (1975) stated that trade unionism as an integral part of complicated yet on the whole smoothly working system of industrial relations. In the words of The Industrial Relations Ordinance, 1969, "trade union means any combination of workmen or employers formed primarily for the purpose of regulating the relations between workmen and employers or workmen and workmen or employers and employers for

imposing restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business and includes a federation of two or more trade unions". [Section 2(16)]

It is evident that political links of trade unions have become universal although the nature and extent of the relationship between trade unions and political parties differ from country to country. In advanced capitalist societies, trade unions of the whole country are linked up with a single political party through their single central organisation, while in post-colonial country like Bangladesh, trade unions are tied up with too many political parties through multiple federations of trade unions. In the former case all trade unions within the country assemble together under one umbrella and for that matter the countries working class remains united. Their political divisions are hardly indulged. But in the latter case, as in most backward underdeveloped countries, the picture is different (Taher, 1996). Trade unions have to play a prominent role in these countries during their movement for independence vis-a-vis anti-autocratic movement, thereby making the same set of people act both as leaders of trade unions and as those of political parties. In most cases a trade union leader and a politician was one and the same person. So an inter-locking of the nationalist and the labour movement becomes inevitable in almost all the underdeveloped countries like ours.

It is true that, in Bangladesh, most of the political parties tried their best to open its labour front in important industrial areas to strengthen their respective power bases. Consequently more than one union exists in each plant or industry. It creates a total war of politicization of the country's working class as well as labour movement and thereby a shredding of the whole labour forces comes to countless pieces. This shredding process of politicization reached its peak after July 1976, when the military government promulgated the "Political Party Rules (PPR), 1976" requiring that each and every political party must declare its sister organisation such as labour front. It is interesting to note that most of the political parties in Bangladesh claimed that they have trade unions with them

(Umar and Kabir, 1978). Activities of political parties among industrial workers went on increasing since then and the workers have experienced political pulls in all directions. Industrial belts became battlefields of political parties. The workers, who had once fought together against their common enemies, started fighting each other. Trade union leaders became instrumental in making chaos on behalf of their parent organisation i. e. political party. Bangladesh experienced serious labour indiscipline and inter-union rivalries after its independence. Clashes between supporter of the ruling party and other opponent unions were rampant (Islam, 1983). In spite of politicization of trade unions, in terms of economic benefits and labour welfare facilities, the position of workers is perhaps no better, or even worse than that of prevailing at the time of adopting the first labour policy since 1972 (Khan 1986).

The tradition of politicization of trade unions in post-liberation Bangladesh has its roots in that far past. Both in British India and during Pakistan rule trade union movements were carried forward by political actions. In Bangladesh period, it is also seen that without support of political parties most of the trade union movement were not successful. In fact, the trade union movement is manifested and successful when political parties are actively participate to carry on their normal activities.

2. Rationale and Objectives of the Study

A survey of the existing literature reveals that no empirical research has yet been made exactly on the same topic. This research gap induced the author to undertake the present study. It is hoped that the findings of the study will be added new knowledge to the existing literature on the subject which may benefit the present and potential learners on industrial relations in general and trade unions in particular in Bangladesh.

The primary objective of the study is to examine the politicization of trade unions in Bangladesh. To fulfill this main objective, the following specific objectives have been taken into

consideration:

- i. To examine the important factors affecting the uneven growth of trade unions;
- ii. To study the reasons of workers for joining the trade unions;
- iii. To examine the effects of the affiliation of trade unions with political parties;
- iv. To identify the problems related with politicization of trade unions and to suggest some measures for removing them.

3. Research Methodology

The study has been made 5 enterprises- 3 from public sector and 2 from private sector. From the sample enterprises 20 general workers, 10 trade union leaders and 10 management personnel were selected as samples for interview. Ten government officials of the relevant department were also selected for interview. Respondents were selected purposively.

Both the primary and secondary data have been used for the purpose of the study. The primary data have been collected from the sample enterprises and concerned government agencies through a questionnaire by direct interview method. A questionnaire was prepared in the light of the objectives of the study. In addition to this, different research findings on trade unionism were used as secondary sources. Moreover, various published materials have been taken into consideration for developing the theoretical framework of the study.

The collected data and information have been processed manually. Simple statistical tools like, average, percentage, index etc. have been used in present study. Finally the article has been prepared in the present form in order to make the study more informative, analytical and useful to the readers.

4. Analysis of Findings

The major findings of the present study are analysed as follows:

4.1. Uneven Growth and Small Size of Unions

The deep intimacy between trade unions and political parties ultimately develop the uneven growth of trade unions in Bangladesh. In most cases a trade unions leader and a politician was one and the same person. For example, Mr. Abul Basher is a President of Jatiya Sramik Federation and also member of Polit Bureau of Workers Party of Bangladesh and Mr. M. Shahidullah is a labour leader and also the President of Communist Party of Bangladesh. The statistical data shows that in 1971, there were only 1160 registered trade unions in the country with a membership of 4,50,606 only. During the period 1971-97, it rose to 5319 with a total membership 17,93,074. These data revealed that trade union index is 60.6 higher than trade union membership index. From table -1 it also observed that the total membership of trade unions in Bangladesh has been gradually increasing since independence, but the average membership has been declining. As a result, the majority of the trade unions in Bangladesh are small in size. This may be clear from the table- 1.

The present study try to explore the factors behind the uneven growth of trade unions in Bangladesh. The study revealed a number of factors are responsible for this which presented in table-2. From table-2 it depicts that political parties play the most dominant role while opportunism of trade union leadership i.e. personal interest of trade union leaders and attitude of workers towards trade unionism are the second and third dominant factors for uneven growth of trade unions in Bangladesh. This was supported by other previous studies too. Khan (1987) stated uneven growth of trade union is a by-product of politicization. Different political parties are in competition among themselves and as a result each and every union is known by the political party it belongs. This extent of politicization may be well understood by the fact that at the national level there are as many as 23 national federations of trade unions, of whom the most are affiliated with different political parties (table-3). Millan (1963), Johri (1964) and Ramaswamy (1977) have examined the growth of trade unions

in the context of developing economics. All these study found that politicization is the most important factor for uneven growth of trade unions. The affiliation of trade unions with political parties is considered necessary because without ideology the existence of trade union is not possible. Usually the influence of political parties provided inputs for the formation of multiple trade unions at the plant level. Workers attitude towards unionism is the third important force for rapid growth of trade unions in Bangladesh.

4.2. Reasons for Joining Trade Unions

Several research studies have been conducted to find out the reasons for workers to join a trade union. Parmar (1997) indicated that workers join trade unions because of many reasons but predominantly they feel that unions will protect their interests and provide safeguard against victimization. Cheema (1990) in his thesis has pointed out that workers join trade unions to fight for the legitimate demands of workers, to provide safeguards against victimization, to increase wages and to resolve industrial grievances. The present study also proves this point beyond doubt. When asked, why you are joining trade unions, most of the respondents workers mentioned more than one reasons. This information are presented in table-4. The table -4 reveals that 80 percent of workers mentioned that they had joined trade unions in order to protect their interests and safeguard them from any sorts of victimization by the employers/ management.

4.3. Political Affiliation of Unions

One of the biggest problems which the country's labour movement faces is the influence of political parties. In fact, the unions are closely aligned with political parties and political leaders continue to dominate the unions even now. It is interesting to note that most of the trade union leaders changed their political affiliation more then once, in order to satisfy their desires to be with the labour front of the ruling political party

and thereby reap personal gains, out of miseries of the rank-and-file members. Some trade union leaders were reluctant to identify themselves with any of the political parties existing in the country. There are two reasons: (i) fear of repressive measures against the trade union leaders may be adopted by the regime in power; (ii) to receive personal gains or favour either from incumbent regime or from the future regime. Similar findings were found in the study of Bhuiyan (1988). It is also reveal that a few trade union leaders, specially belongs to left - oriented political parties in the opposition, have never changed their political affiliation.

In response to a question regarding the political affiliation of trade unions, 40 percent of workers, 70 percent of trade union leaders, 20 percent of managers and 10 percent of government officials replied that trade unions should be affiliated to the political parties, whereas 60 percent workers, 30 percent of trade union leaders, 60 percent of managers and 70 percent government officials were against the affiliation of trade union with political parties (table-5). The respondents were asked about the effects of political affiliation of trade unions. The information of this enquiry is presented in table-6. From table-6 it reveals that 75 percent of workers, 50 percent of trade union leaders, 60 percent of managers and 80 percent of government officials expressed that it was harmful, whereas 20 percent of workers, 30 percent of trade union leaders, 40 percent of managers and 20 percent of government officials considered it neither harmful nor useful. Only 05 percent of workers and 20 percent of trade union leaders replied that it was useful.

4.4. Leadership Issue

Leadership is one of the most critical variable in trade union organisation and movement. Prior to independence, the Bangladesh trade union movement was closely associated with the nationalist movement of the country and as such trade union politics was dominated by national leaders. Those leaders (like Dr. A.M. Malik, Mr. Faiz Ahmed, Mr. Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury, Mr. Mahbubul Haq etc.) played an important role in organizing

trade unions and labour movement in Bangladesh. There are host of reasons that has led to the growth of outside leadership. *First*, most of the workers are illiterate and unorganised and thereby the necessity of outside leaders in trade union can not be underestimated. *Second*, management is more powerful than workers in all perspective. So the union often search for persons who can lead and guide them. These outsiders (leaders) not only help the unions to fight for their cause but also prevent the workers from tyrannies of management.

In fact, the outside leadership of unions leads to political unionism, which, in turn, leads to the multiplicity of unions and to intra-union rivalry. Moreover, outside leaders are more concerned with "maximizing their individual/party interest other than maximizing welfare and well-being of workers." They also create a vested interests in the internal affairs of the trade unions. On the other hand, it appears that the workers are not happy with their worker- leaders (i.e., insiders). Because, in many cases, the insiders betray the cause of the general workers. In spite of these most of the respondents feel that inside leadership in trade unionism is more desirable for a healthy growth of trade union movement in Bangladesh because they can truly meets the needs and expectations of rank- and -file members.

4.5. Financial Weaknesses

Another vexing problem of trade unions is that of financial weaknesses. The average income of the most of the unions has been low and inadequate not because of the poverty of the workers but because of certain other factors. These are: (i) the workers are apathetic towards the activities of trade unions and do not want to contribute a part of their hard - earned money because the trade union leaders act as the agent of management and employers and also use their official status to fulfill their personal interests; (ii) under conditions of multiple unions most of the unions are interested to increasing its membership figures rather than collection of subscription regularly; (iii) the commitment of workers towards trade union are very low.

The insufficiency of funds is the main reason for the deplorable conditions of many a small union which adversely affects their working. This poor financial condition compels the trade union leaders to depend on the blessings of the government, donations from political parties, employers, international labour agencies (i.e., WFTU, ICFTU, ILO) etc. and this dependence makes their position most vulnerable (Taher 1996). Moreover, the trade union activities thus suffer to the extent in so far as finance is concerned. Therefore, the best way of improving the financial condition of the unions would be to eliminate trade union rivalry by strictly adhering to the principle of "one union in one industry" and also ensure the genuine participation of workers through "check-off" system in concerned enterprises.

4.6. Multiplicity of Unions

Multiplicity of unions are an important feature and one of the great weaknesses in the labour politics of Bangladesh. The multiple unions are mainly the result of political outside wanting to establish unions of their own with a view to increasing their political influence, albeit in urban industrial areas (Rao 1983). The different political views among the workers and their unions and also opportunism of trade union leadership are largely responsible for the multiplicity of trade unions in Bangladesh. Khan (1986) mentioned that political divisions among the ranks of the union leadership and membership lead to multiplicity of unions both at the grassroots and national level. Punekar (1948) , Sharma(1963) , Mathur (1964) and Karnik (1978) all have dealt with process of divisiveness of trade unions, the development of factionalism and resultant formation of different trade union organisation. For example, in 1974 , there was only three registered trade unions in Bangladesh Railway, but now it raised to eight registered trade unions. The same is in Chittagong Port Authority and Adamjee Jute Mills Ltd. also (Table-7). It is clearly violation of existing labour law of Bangladesh (Sec. 7, IRO, 1969). This trend also develops small size of trade unions which undermines the strength and solidarity of the workers in many ways.

Politicization of trade unions i.e. multiplicity of trade unions in Bangladesh creates a lot of problems in the industrial relations system as well as in the economic development of the country. Several past research studies indicated that higher unionization rates have been associated with decreased profitability, slower growth and decreased investment in plant, equipment and research and development (Bronars, Deere and Tracy, 1994; Hirsch, 1991). A longitudinal study examining the effects of unions on productivity over a ten year period concluded that unions, overall, have a negative effect on productivity (Maki and Meredith, 1986). Unionized workers tend to be less satisfied than non-union workers with their jobs (Leigh, 1986). Strikes and other forms of work stoppages not only result in lost sales, penalties paid to customers for delay in delivery and mediation and arbitration costs, but also in a variety of other costs which are less obvious e. g. overtime costs for administrative personnel, fixed overhead for idle plant capacity, damages caused by sabotage (Das and Manimala, 1997). Parmar (1997) in his study found workers believe that multiplicity of trade unions has led to inter-union rivalries and other such problems. He further stated that politicization of trade unions is detrimental to the workers interests. The present study found that politicization of trade unions have created a lot of problems. These related problems are intra-union and inter-union rivalries among trade unions, increasing more political influence among trade unions, developing militant attitudes among trade union leaders, tendency to avoid collective bargaining process by the employers, developing unhealthy competition in collective bargaining agent (CBA) election, developing unstable and volatile law and order situation through inter-union rivalries, absence of concentrated efforts for improving labor management relations and productivity etc. (table-8).

5. Policy Implications

It is regrettable to note that, for the past several years, trade unionism in Bangladesh has lost its previous glorious role and images. Now trade unionism is being identified as a disturbing or hampering element in the development of our national economy. World Bank, Other development partners and aid

donor countries are now pressing on the government to ban or to impose restrictions on trade union activities because of uneven growth of trade unions in Bangladesh. Recently (Feb.1998) government has banned all union activities in the Bangladesh Bank. Government has imposed restrictions on trade union activities in the Export Processing Zone also. The present study suggests some remedial measures in this regard. These are:

- a) Influence of political parties on trade union activities should be minimum;
- b) Relevant section of IRO, 1969 (as amended up-to-date) regarding the formation of trade union should be ratified;
- c) Proper development of leadership at the plant level should be emphasized with respect to national goals and aspirations;
- d) Workers training and orientation programs should be undertaken in order to make them more conscious. Management can play vital role in this regard;
- e) Tripartite decision making system such as Works Council may be formed in various organisation which will reduce workers tendency to organize new or more trade unions;
- f) Actions such as prior consultation with the union on all important issues affecting the organisation, a sincere concern for the welfare of the employees and use of joint study committees (representing both the union and management) can go a long way in improving the management-union relations of an industrial enterprise. This will strengthen the understanding between workers and management;
- g) Legal provision of only one trade union per enterprise as the bargaining agent of workers at various level should be strictly maintained.

6. Conclusion

Politicization of trade unions is a general phenomenon of our national political culture. It suffers from a variety of problems, such as uneven growth and small size of unions, multiplicity of

unions, intra and inter-union rivalry, dependence of outside leadership, financial weaknesses etc. This vicious circle has adversely affected the environment for trade unionism in Bangladesh.

It is true that since liberation each and every political party, specially ruling regimes wants to open its labour front in important industrial areas. As a result multiple trade unions exists in each plant and industry. It is also observed that most of the decisions in the trade union field are taken by the respective political parties to which unions are affiliated, and, therefore, with the changing political situation, the decisions also changes. With a split in the political ideology, there develops a factional split in the same trade union professing the same political ideology. The divisions and sub-divisions thus made have adversely affected the trade union movement. It has become fragmented and disjointed. Each section pulls in a different direction; with the result that instead of becoming a unity and a mighty torrential river, the movement is sub-divided into numerous rivulets.

At present trade unionism is a burning issue in our country. Bangladesh is now turning towards an industrial economy and we have to maintain industrial peace and harmony through encouraging as well as by strictly adhering to the principle of "one union in one industry" and also taking appropriate measures for smooth functioning of our trade unions.

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ANNEXURES

Table —1

Growth of Trade Unions, Membership and Average Membership per Union in Bangladesh: 1971-97

Years	Number of Registered Trade Unions	Indices of Trade Unions (Base=1971)	Number of Members of Trade Unions	Indices of Trade Unions Membership (Base=1971)	Average membership per union
1971 (31st Dec.)	1160	100	450,606	100	388
1972 (*)	2523	217.5	682,923	151.56	271
1973 (*)	3096	266.90	8,59735	190.80	278
1974 (*)	3320	286.21	9,46,977	210.16	285
1975 (*)	3161	272.50	9,21,152	204.43	291
1976 (*)	3037	261.81	8,95,904	198.82	295
1977 (*)	3005	259.05	873,128	193.77	291
1978 (*)	3178	273.87	10,06,516	223.37	317
1979 (*)	3357	289.40	10,41,080	231.04	310
1980 (*)	3613	311.47	10,97,707	243.61	304
1981 (*)	3533	304.57	11,27,508	250.22	319
1982 (*)	2156	185.86	9,46,048	209.95	439
1983 (*)	2216	191.03	9,47,281	210.22	427
1984 (*)	2488	214.48	10,75,496	238.68	432
1985 (*)	2593	223.53	10,90,338	241.97	420
1986 (*)	3132	270.00	11,64,279	258.38	372
1987 (*)	3387	291.98	11,95,704	265.35	353
1988 (*)	3625	312.50	14,21,834	315.54	392
1989 (*)	3908	336.90	15,17,567	336.78	388
1990 (*)	3789	326.64	16,19,008	359.30	427
1991 (*)	3956	341.03	16,42,915	364.60	415
1992 (*)	4065	350.43	16,48,783	365.90	406
1993 (*)	4238	365.34	16,74,949	371.71	395
1994 (*)	4484	386.55	16,81,690	373.21	375
1995 (*)	4514	389.14	17,02,112	377.74	377
1996 (*)	4955	427.16	17,30,927	384.13	349
1997 (*)	5319	458.53	17,93,074	397.93	337

Source: Compiled from Bangladesh Labour Journal (Several Issues), DOL, GOB. Supplemented by the unpublished data form DOL, GOB, Dhaka. Computation made by the author.

Table-2**Factors Affecting Uneven Growth of Trade Unions in Bangladesh**

Factors mentioned by the respondents	% of different categories of respondents				
	Managers (n=10)	Govt. Officials (n=10)	Trade Union leaders (n=10)	General workers (n=20)	Weighted Average Scores
Dominance of political parties in the trade unions	100	100	40	50	68
Personal interest of workers and trade union leaders	90	100	20	60	66
Ideological conflict among the trade union members	20	30	80	80	58
Workers attitude towards trade unionism	50	30	80	80	64
Union security provision in legal framework	70	40	60	60	58
Providing safeguard against victimization	40	-	40	80	48
Encouragement by management	-	60	-	40	28

Source : *Field Investigation, 1998.*

Table - 3
Registered National Federations of Trade Unions (NFTUs) and
their Political Affiliation
(As on Dec. 31, 1997)

1.	Jatiya Sramik Federation	BJF-1; Dt. 30.8.77	Non-Political
2.	Bangladesh Trade Union Centre	BJF-2 ; Dt. 19.10.77	Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB)
3.	Bangladesh Sangukta Sramik Federation	BJF-4; Dt. 6.7.78	Non-Political
4.	Bangladesh Trade Union Sangha	BJF-5 ; Dt. 7.10.78	Non-Political
5.	Jatiya Sramik Jote	BJF-6 ; Dt. 4.12.78	Jatiya Samaj-tantrik Dal (Rab)
6.	Bangladesh Jatiya-tabadi Sramik Dal	BJF-7 ; Dt. 26.4.79	Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)
7.	Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik League	B-1676; Dt. 2.1.73	Non-Political
8.	Bangladesh Sramik Kallyan Federation	BJF-8; Dt. 15.5.80	Jamat-e-Islami Bangladesh
9.	Jatiya Sramik Federation Bangladesh	BJF-9 ; Dt. 31.12.80	Worker's Party of Bangladesh
10.	Bangla Sramik Federation	BJF-10; Dt. 3.9.82	People's Party of Bangladesh
11.	Jatiya Sramik League	BJF-11 ; Dt. 12.1.80	Bangladesh Awami League
12.	Bangladesh Trade Union Federation	BJF-12; Dt. 29.3.83	Non-Political
13.	Bangladesh Free Trade Union Congress	BJF-16; Dt. 15.12.83	Non-Political
14.	Bangladesh Sramik Federation	BJF-17; Dt. 29.5.84	Non-Political
15.	Jatiya Sramik Party	BJF-19; Dt. 29.3.83	Jatiya Party
16.	Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik Forum	BJF-20; Dt. 3.8.87	Non-Political
17.	Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik Federation	BJF-21; Dt. 29.9.87	Non-Political
18.	Samajtantrik Sramik Front	BJF-22; Dt. 5.12.88	Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal
19.	Jatiya Sramik Jote Bangladesh	BJF-23; Dt. 26.2.89	Jatiya Samaj-tantrik Dal (Inu)
20.	Jatiya Sramik Karmachari Jote	BJF-24; Dt. 19.3.90	Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal

21. National Trade Union Federation	BJF-25; Dt. 28.5.90	Non-Political
22. National Workers Federation	BJF-26; Dt. 30.5.90	Bangladesh National Democratic Party
23. Bangladesh Workers Federation	BJF-27; Dt. 16.8.92	Non-Political

Source : DOL, GOB. Verified Lists of NFTUs as on Dec. 31, 1997

Table - 4
Reasons of Worker's Joining Trade Unions

Reasons mentioned by the respondents	Number	Percentage
To safeguard against victimization	22	80
To protect and promote workers interest.	20	80
To get the increase in wages	12	48
To fight for establishing the legitimate rights as members of working class	15	60
To feel that trade union is essential	10	40
To convinced that trade union can bring some good to them.	5	20
To resolve industrial grievances.	5	20

Note : Total percentage exceeds 100 because most of the respondents mentioned more than one reasons for joining the trade unions.

Source: Field Investigation, 1998.

Table - 5
Affiliation of Trade Unions with Political Parties

Responses	Workers	Trade union leaders	Managers	Govt. officials
Yes	8 (40)	7 (70)	2 (20)	1 (10)
No	12 (60)	3 (30)	6 (60)	7 (70)
Don't know	-	-	2 (20)	2 (20)
Total	20 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

Note : Figures in parentheses denote percentages

Source: Field Investigation, 1998.

Table - 6

Effects of the Affiliation of Trade Unions with Political Parties

Responses	Workers	Trade union leaders	Managers	Govt. officials
Positive/Useful	1 (05)	2 (20)	-	-
Negative/Harmful	15 (75)	5 (50)	6 (60)	8 (80)
Neither positive nor negative	4 (20)	3 (30)	4 (40)	2 (20)
Total	20 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

Note : Figures in parentheses denote percentages

Source : *Field Investigation, 1998.*

Table - 7

Registered Trade Unions in Some Organisation and Their Political Affiliations

Name of the Organization	Name of the Trade Unions	Reg. No & date of Reg.	Political Affiliation
Adamjee Jute Mills (A. J. M) Ltd.	1. AJM Sramik union 2. AJM United Employees Union 3. AJM Sramik Sangha 4. AJM Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal 5. AJM Karmachari Union	R/Dhaka-72 Date : 1.5.70 R/B-964 Date : 1.4.64 R/Dhaka-1279 Date: 7.2.89 R/Dhaka 2965 Date : 11.12.89	Communist Party of Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal Bangladesh Awami League Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Dal Workers Party of Bangladesh
Chittagong Port Authority (CPA)	1. C.P.A. Sramik Union 2. C.P.A Sramik League 3. C.P.A. Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal 4. C.P.A Islamic Sramik Sangha 5. Bandar Jatiya Sramik League	R/100 Date : 9.10.64 R/172 Date : 24.3.72 R/817 Date. 18.2.80 R/1118 Date : 25.2.89 R/1398 Date: 25.2.89	Communist Party of Bangladesh Bangladesh Awami League Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Dal Jamat-E-Islami Bangladesh Awami League
Bangladesh Railway (BR)	1. B.R Sramik League 2. B.R Sramik Union 3. B.R Station Masters & Karmachari Union 4. B. R Employees League 5. B. R Karmachari Parishad 6. B. R Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal 7. B. R Jatiya Sramik Party 8. B. R Punning Staff 2 Sramik Karmachari Samity	B/320 Date: 28.10.64 B/1583 Date: 12.4.72 B/1691 Date: 25.2.74 R/1703 Date : 7.1.78 R/1731 Date : 7.3.78 R/1765 Date : 30.1.81 R/1861 Date : 18.10.88 B/1878 Date : 5.10.89	Bangladesh Awami League Communist Party of Bangladesh Non-Political Non-Political Non-Political Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Dal Jatiya Party Non-Political

Source : Field Survey, 1998

Table-8
Problems Related with Politicization of Trade Unions

Problems mentioned by the respondents	% of different categories of respondents				
	Managers (n=10)	Govt. officials (n=10)	Trade union leaders (n=10)	General workers (n=20)	Weighted Average Scores
Increasing political influences among the trade unions	100	100	40	60	72
Intra-union and inter-union rivalries	80	80	60	80	76
Developing unhealthy competition in CBA election	80	80	30	40	54
Tendency to avoid the collective bargaining process by the employers	10	20	80	70	50
Developing militant attitudes among the trade union leaders	80	80	20	40	52
Extraction of benefits under threat or physical violence	80	80	20	20	44
Creation of a sense of big-boss leaders among rank and file members	80	70	20	30	46
Accomplishment of trade union activities detrimental to the workers as well as national interest	80	80	40	60	64
Absence of concentrated efforts for improving labor management relations and productivity	70	60	40	60	58
Developing unstable and volatile law and order situation	70	60	50	40	52

Source : *Field Investigation 1998.*

BOOK REVIEW

The Asia Australia Survey 1997-98, Bernie Bishop and Deborah McNamara (eds.) 1997, Melbourne : Macmillan Education Australia Pte. Ltd., pp. XIV + 593, ISBN : 07329 45585, A\$ 99.50

This impressive annual now in its fourth year, maintains its high standard of scholarly exposition on the various aspects of contemporary Asia-Australia Relations. It is a thorough and comprehensive survey (593 pages) by twenty two contributors who represent a broad spectrum of interests : including political science, economics, public policy, international politics, history and sociology. However, most of the contributors are engaged in teaching and research in different universities and institutions of Australia.

The survey is organised into three main sections. Part I of the survey entitled the 'thematic section' examines and succinctly overviews Australia's relations with the countries of Asia. Part II is the most extensive part of the survey comprising some 441 pages. It focuses and highlights recent developments in the Australia's bilateral relations with the sixteen countries of East and South Asia. In addition it also provides a profile of eight countries. Part III of the survey comprises brief descriptions of ten regional organisations such as APEC, ASEAN, ARF, ESCAP and SAARC. It also contains an enormous amount of recent data including tables, charts and Australia-Asia contacts and list of publications.

Densely populated Asia, particularly East Asia has experienced spectacular and rapid economic development during the past three decades or so and emerged as the fastest growing region in the world. At present, over 60% of Australia's merchandise exports are sold to the countries of Asia. Obviously, Australia-Asia

politico-economic relations have assumed new significance. Economic prosperity or economic crisis and turmoil in the Asian countries also affects Australia in many ways.

The editors write in the preface that the *Asia-Australia Survey* was intended to contribute to the better understanding of Australia's role and place in Asia. While exploring the different dimensions of Australia's relations with the countries of Asia they find that successive 'Australian governments have come to regard economic integration into Asia as a matter of the highest national priority. 'Gradually, the substance of the thematic section becomes clear with a common thread of essays such as 'Australia's Regional Diplomacy', 'Double Vision : How Asia and Australia See Each Other' and 'Australia's Export Culture'.

The contributors also recognise some of the issues which have created image problem for Australia in the Asian Countries. These are : The arbitrary scraping of Development Import Finance Facility (DIFF) by the Howard government, the so-called Hanson race debate, foreign policy initiatives "to reinvigorate the Australia-America relations". All these seem to create serious misunderstandings and affect Australia's relations with the Asian countries including its push for further expansion of trade and investment in the region.

In order to cope with the issue of Australia's image problem in the Asian countries, some important recommendations have been put forward by Alison Broinowski in her excellent article entitled "Double Vision : How Asia and Australia See Each Other." However the contributors do not see the need to caution Australian policy makers that economic and financial turmoil in the East Asian countries will have adverse effect on Australia. Notably, these countries have been vital to much of Australia's export growth and job creation during the past decade. The editors conclude that despite some 'hiccups', and misunderstanding, 1996 was a relatively successful year in terms of Australia's politico-economic relations with Asian countries.

In fact, with rich information and comprehensive and detailed statistical reviews, the survey provides a fascinating insight into the current state of Asia-Australia relations. It is

certainly a valuable source of information and a contribution to the literature. However, the time frame in the title of the book (1997-98) is somewhat ambiguous as the survey is retrospective for 1996 rather than predictive and does not practical reasons, address the issues and events of that period.

Some contradictory statements and claims are also noticeable in the Survey. For example, while David Walton states that "The attempts at developing close trade relations with India were largely unsuccessful' (p. 31), Samina Yasmeen maintains that "Australia's economic links with India continued to strengthen in 1996' (p. 167). The editors should have been more cautious in checking data for accuracy and consistency. In page 167, for example, Australia's exports to India during 1996 appear both as A\$ 1,224.3 million and A\$ 1,222 million respectively. The index of the survey assists the readers in locating specific facts, figures and personalities.

Overall, informative and analytical, this survey is a useful tool for students, scholars, policy makers, and business executives who are eager to understand the dynamics of contemporary Australia's relations with the countries of Asia.

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